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ABSTRACT

Ten essays address aspects of second language instruction at the elementary school level: "Elementary School Foreign Languages: Perspectives, Practices, and Promises" (Carol Ann Pesola, Helena Anderson Curtain); "The Integrated Curriculum: Rethinking the Elementary School Foreign Language Program for the '90s" (Virginia Garibaldi Allen); "The Ages and Learning Stages of Children and Their Implications for Foreign Language Learning" (Myriam Chapman, Elizabeth Grob, Mari Haas); "Learning Language through Content: Learning Content through Language" (Myriam Met); "Creating Effective Foreign Language Learning Environments in Elementary Classrooms" (Eileen B. Lorenz, Sarah Rice); "School-District Perspectives on Elementary-School Language Programs" (R. Stephen Tegarden, Christine L. Brown); "Testing and Elementary School Foreign Language Programs" (John W. Oller, Jr.); "Mother Tongue and Father Grammar, or, Why Should Children Learn a Second Language?" (Donald G. Marshall); "Two Languages for All Children: Expanding to Low Achievers and the Handicapped" (Carolyn Andrade, Richard R. Kretschmer, Jr., Laura W. Kretschmer); and "Policy and Curricular Implications of Expanding Language Education in Elementary Schools" (Kurt E. Muller). (MSE)

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Languages in Elementary Schools

Edited by Kurt E. Müller

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The American Forum for Global Education

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Languages in Elementary Schools

edited by

Kurt E. Müller

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45 John Street, Suite 1200, New York, New York 10038

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Preface

For over a century the study of languages in the United States has vacillated between public support for transmitting the heritage of our ancestors to hostility toward ethnic groups other than the dominant one. When public support was widespread, language study was offered quite broadly; when attitudes were isolationist or assimilationist, language study was restricted to elites, who would need the access to other societies that language competence confers. Over the past decade the pendulum of public support has swung toward expanding languages at all levels of education. During the life of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (Perkins Commission), the University of Michigan Survey Research Center found that 76% of the college-educated public supported offering languages in elementary schools. Subsequent national reports have continued to call for expanded language study. In its 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*, the National Commission on Excellence in Education wrote

> Achieving proficiency in a *foreign language* ordinarily requires from 4–6 years of study and should, therefore, be started in the elementary grades. We believe it is desirable that students achieve such proficiency because study of a foreign language introduces students to non-English-speaking cultures, heightens awareness and comprehension of one's native tongue, and serves the Nation's needs in commerce, diplomacy, defense, and education.

At the end of 1983, the National Advisory Board on International Education Programs (Holderman Board), wrote of international education:

> The groundwork must be laid in the elementary schools. Unfortunately the majority of our elementary schools do not offer any foreign language instruction.... We believe that foreign language instruction should be offered to all students (p. 6).

Since the Holderman Board's task was oriented toward higher education, it is significant that its first recommendation was directed at elementary education:

> Local school districts should provide every student with the opportunity to begin the study of a foreign language in the earliest years of formal education and to

> continue study of the same language until a functionally useful level of measured proficiency has been achieved (p. 9).

In his 1983 report on secondary education in America, Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, recommends, "language study should begin early—by the fourth grade and preferably before—and it should be sustained" (p. 100).

As the decade progressed, public opinion became ever more supportive of early language instruction. A 1986 Media General-Associated Press poll found that 84% of the public agreed that anglophone children should be taught a foreign language in elementary school. Municipal school systems and entire states had already responded by specifying an early start to language study. New York required beginning prior to high school; Hawaii and Louisiana mandated beginning specifically in elementary school; and North Carolina has taken the most extensive step, by mandating language instruction for all students from Kindergarten to 5th grade and a continuous program of study available from 6th grade through high school.

Against this background of support, a number of advocates for early language learning raised concerns that the language profession not repeat mistakes of the '50s and '60s. My own review of the earlier advocacy for beginning in elementary school convinced me that one area in which the discipline faltered was its incomplete development of the infrastructure needed to support elementary-school instruction. Unlike the situation in secondary and postsecondary institutions, it is not the disciplines that drive instruction at the elementary level. Since one teacher is primarily responsible for classroom instruction, that teacher is crucial to the success of efforts to integrate specialized instruction into the curriculum. Principals must be supportive of instructional innovation if the novelty is to become institutionalized. School districts must be convinced of the value of something new if that new area is to survive periodic budgetary shortfalls. Thus a necessary emphasis of the project that was to emerge from several national and regional consultations was to relate the discipline of foreign language study to the multitude of interests present in every school system. Not only would language study be related to other disciplines, but advocates for elementary language programs would have to address the concerns of principals, curriculum directors, and superintendents.

On behalf of the National Council on Foreign Language and International Studies, I then proposed a project to the U.S. Department of Education to develop guidelines for teacher education programs for current and prospective elementary school language teachers. The rapid expansion of opportunities for elementary school language instruction called for an examination of concerns that should be addressed in inservice programs as well as in collegiate programs aimed at qualifying prospective teachers. The first step would have to entail a serious look at the elementary curriculum and an appreciation of the roles of the principal actors in the education structure. Indeed, once the project was funded, the steering committee immediately considered a range of concerns to be addressed by a set of position papers. Initial consultations with the authors led to numerous refinements. Close readings by the steering committee provided a rigorous review. The result is before you.

The opening chapter, by Carol Ann Pesola and Helena Anderson Curtain, provides a general overview of existing elementary school foreign language programs and the differences in their emphases. Published in abbreviated form in 1988 in *Access*, the newsletter of the American Forum, this chapter also functioned as a background paper for the project. Each author was given a copy and asked to conform to the terminology and definitions in this paper. Thus the term FLES is used only for the instructional model of limited exposure to the language; the term "elementary school foreign language programs" covers all instructional models from FLEX to immersion.

From this hub the subsequent chapters emanate, exploring issues that must be addressed if languages are to thrive in elementary school settings. Although the collection may well be used as a text for prospective teachers or as the basis of an inservice seminar, individual chapters may interest colleagues from various backgrounds. In the second chapter, Virginia Allen calls for close coordination between language teachers and elementary classroom teachers. If language study is to be fully accepted by the primary classroom teacher, the expansion of language to this level must not be discipline driven as it was in the 1960s; language and the elementary curriculum must be mutually reinforcing. Elementary classroom teachers are keenly aware of differences in children's activities at different ages. Paraprofessionals who volunteer to introduce children to another language and teachers who enthusiastically attempt to move their own discipline to an earlier stage are often unaware of differences in teaching 5 year olds or 10 year olds. Although we have often started language instruction in junior high schools, when children are also asked to deal with the abstractions of English grammar, if we aim to produce proficient speakers, this age may be the worst for introducing a foreign language. Just when children most emulate each other, when they want to be just like their friends, not different from them, we ask them to produce sounds that do not occur in their native language. The implications of such social developments as well as the motor and cognitive developments described by Jean Piaget form the basis of the chapter by Myriam Chapman, Elizabeth Grob, and Mari Haas. The regular classroom teacher usually deals with only one age group during the course of the year. The itinerant FLES teacher may teach children of six different ages on one day. Such a teacher must be able to use appropriate techniques for each of these age groups.

By contrast with adolescent and adult learners, children are far less book-oriented in acquiring information. Even when exploring mathematical relationships with concrete objects, however, they verbalize their experience, trying to explain the conclusions they reach and asking for more information. Concrete experience and verbal concepts are often acquired simultaneously. These learning experiences need not be in their native language. Because elementary school learning is less compartmentalized by discipline, the subject matter introduced in a foreign language need not be restricted to language itself or the peoples who speak it. When advocates of language in elementary schools are confronted by teachers or administrators who do not know how to find time in the day for yet another subject, it is helpful to demonstrate the acquisition of language when it is the medium of instruction, employed to teach some other area. Myriam Met gives examples of appropriate subject matter across the curriculum that can be taught initially or reinforced through another language.

If Met's chapter emphasizes the perspective of the curriculum director, the following chapter develops the same issues from the teacher's perspective. An early-childhood education specialist, Sarah Rice, and an immersion resource teacher, Eileen Lorenz, have teamed up to explore the development of effective learning environments for teaching the elementary curriculum (or parts of it) through another language.

Another perspective on language study in the schools is provided by Stephen Tegarden and Christine Brown. Although American education is supposed to be suprapolitical, there remains a political dimension to adopting and funding programs. School administrations respond to community desires, whether through a community vote on an education budget or through school board meetings at which the public advocates or denounces a given policy. Parental desires are a strong driving force to which administrations often defer. Historically, when parent groups or communities have insisted on language programs, the schools have provided them. Although improved language development and international competition may be good reasons to expand language education to the elementary grades, community support will determine whether such programs thrive. Achieving such support forms the thrust of the paper by Tegarden, a superintendent, and Brown, a language supervisor.

Community support is certainly influenced by the achievements of the district schools. Student performance on standardized tests has become regular fare for local newspapers. When district achievements are high, realtors and the local chamber of commerce make these scores a selling point in their respective efforts to sell homes and attract business. The presence of an early foreign language program may provide such attraction. If accountability drives curricular emphasis, individual subjects must also demonstrate some success. The matter of testing has received too little emphasis in the preparation of elementary school language teachers. Language teachers who see 400 students a week cannot be expected to evaluate children's verbal abilities with the same care as the regular classroom teacher, who sees 25 (plus perhaps a reading or math section with students from another class). But student and program evaluations are necessary. John Oller's exploration of testing issues contributes both to the individual classroom and to broader concerns of language development.

Oller's chapter also marks a turn to consideration of a number of theoretical issues. Perhaps the major reason students must be exposed to an additional language is to provide them a comparative dimension in their acquisition of language skill. In his introduction to *Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing Principle*, Theodore Higgs notes quite properly, "it makes a great deal of difference to say, 'if you and I are friends, we can discuss this openly' when you mean 'if you and I were friends, we could discuss this openly.'" I often lament a similar confusion in which speakers or writers intend to use the subjunctive but confuse it with the preterite. Most colleagues tend to agree that had the speakers been taught a foreign language, they would probably have understood the difference because they would have learned this difference in meaning as they compared the forms in two languages. It is also our general experience that students better understand such differences after they have had to confront them in high school and college foreign language classes. The earlier chapters insist on student use of the language, which is contrasted with an abstract study of grammar rules. But exposure to two languages will facilitate the abstractions once students are ready for them. Donald Marshall's chapter offers an English professor's perspective on foreign language study that goes far beyond the issue of contributing to native language development. Particularly at a time when there is a political backlash against the assertion of civil rights by a sizable linguistic minority, Marshall's exploration of an ethical dimension to the study of another person's language is enlightening. His recognition of the limits of our experience is accompanied by an advocacy of language as the means to reach beyond the borders of personal and community identity.

Marshall's paper is unsettling. His advocacy for the recognition of other languages challenges the complacency of the middle-class citizen who has become comfortable with the international strength of the American economic engine. But he also points out other inconsistencies. As one who has offered both educational and national-security justifications for learning other languages, I am shaken by his observation that educators make different arguments to those who pay for education, to students, and to one another. Reading his chapter, I am haunted by the fear that, although I fervently believe the evidence I present and the arguments I make, I am nevertheless perpetrating a minor fraud in that these are not the real reasons I advocate learning other languages. Understanding the concerns of those whose experience differs from our own contributes to world peace, but it is a long road we must travel to reach such understanding. Against a tradition of pragmatic education, a tradition that appears to narrow ever more toward qualifications for a first job, I fear the argument is difficult to make with one eye on the bottom line of a balance sheet. And yet, I can think of no better hope for the future.

Similarly, the argument that foreign language learning gives one more control over one's native language must confront the concern that many schools are not adequately preparing students in English. Marshall's approach may seem most plausible for high-achieving students, but the contribution is not limited to those who score in the top quartiles of achievement tests. In the national political arena, we have started to recognize that some subjects are not widely studied among groups that are not sharing in the nation's economic prosperity. Although we may accept the successes of some as an indication of their likely future contributions to the workplace, if we fail to direct the inner-city black or the farm girl into language, math, and science classes, our meritocracy is undercut by elitism. In language classes, we have long been dually blessed and cursed by an orientation toward the high achiever. Those who have scored well on verbal achievement tests are rewarded with the opportunity to learn an additional language and thereby increase their ability to control their own. Those who do not score well have been denied a sorely needed additional perspective on language development. The chapter by Carolyn Andrade and Richard and Laura Kretschmer shatters the myth that language is for the elite. Oller argues convincingly that language ability holds the key to achievement on standardized tests. The Andrade and Kretschmer chapter offers this key to the disadvantaged.

In my own chapter, I have tried to synthesize much of the wisdom in the preceding contributions with a view toward the implications of our discoveries for two groups: education policy makers and our colleagues in the language profession. Repeatedly, we have found that low achievers can succeed, to a substantial degree, in learning other languages. This light must not be kept under a bushel, accessible only to the initiated. But it illuminates a matter we in the language profession have inadequately researched. Proficiency levels are not purely matters of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and sociolinguistic appropriateness. Transcending these factors is a cognitive hierarchy that assures us that many more Americans can demonstrate substantial achievement in an additional language. Higher skills that are language-dependent but not language-specific are often absent in native speakers. Their development may further unsettle some of our practices in English and foreign language teaching.

Acknowledgements

Several colleagues deserve special recognition for their contributions to the project that produced this book or to the book specifically. For several years, I had been gathering information on elementary school language programs and directing inquiries from across the United States, from Asia and Europe to school districts with particularly successful programs. Replicating these successes in the United States requires building considerable support for a commitment to begin languages earlier. For their encouragement, hospitality, and a wealth of information, I am grateful to Rosemarie Benya, Christine Brown, Helena Anderson Curtain, John Darcey, Thekla Fall, Gladys Lipton, Myriam Met, Carol Ann Pesola, and Nancy Rhodes. Five of these I have burdened with the additional responsibilities of serving on our project steering committee. Without their close reading and continual suggestions, this project would have failed. Christine Brown, Helena Curtain, Mimi Met, Carol Ann Pesola, and Nancy Rhodes have not only served as readers and evaluators but have been willing to promote the project specifically and elementary language programs in general in manuscripts, correspondence, and oral presentations for groups outside the language profession as diverse as the American Forum on Education and International Competence, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Johnson Foundation, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. I am particularly appreciative of the encouragement Rose Hayden gave me to launch this project, and I was fortunate to have two excellent assistants: Sarah Egan, who as research assistant corresponded with authors, committee members, practitioners, and teacher educators and acquired many of the references needed during our research, and Annette Dieli, who was my faithful administrative assistant for four years.

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All the authors have diligently worked through proposals, outlines, and revisions of their manuscripts to meet the exacting demands of a committee with a missionary zeal. I take responsibility for any compromises that may fall short of my committee's desires.

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I save my final thank-you for my closest collaborator and greatest supporter. Editors are accustomed to blue-pencilling the prose of our colleagues to meet our perception of our readers' needs and priorities. We relish the editor's task as we progress much faster than we do in writing our own original manuscripts. But we, too, must turn somewhere for an editorial eye to catch the unintended ambiguities, to suggest an improved organization or to point out a theme requiring further development. In 1986, to help edit a book manuscript, I sought the assistance of a high school English teacher, whose wit and intellect soon captivated me. Little did I know that we would become life-long collaborators in the most treasured of life's relationships. In my writing and projects, as well as in everything else, it is to Elizabeth that I turn when my prose needs editing and my convictions need buttressing.

K.E.M.

Elementary School Foreign Languages: Perspectives, Practices, and Promises

Carol Ann Pesola and Helena Anderson Curtain

Everything old is new again!" This refrain of a popular song expresses very well the situation of elementary school foreign languages as we enter the 1990s. Languages for children, considered a natural part of the curriculum in the early history of the United States, became an educational status symbol in the 1960s and then were cut from most school programs in the wake of budgetary pressures and some disillusionment with the results of language instruction. Now a renewed look at educational priorities in a world of increasing global interdependence has brought foreign languages into the curriculum again. Children have begun to learn languages in their elementary school classrooms because their parents, informed by national studies and prominent critics of education, have discovered that in a shrinking world foreign languages are critical for involvement with business, politics, and even recreation.

Languages in Other Parts of the World

Many of the children in other parts of the world learn languages in school as a matter of course, and for a variety of reasons. English speakers in Canada learn French as a means of communication with a significant component of the society in which they live. English speakers in New Zealand learn Maori to help preserve the language and culture of an important part of the national heritage. Children in Germany learn English or French as a practical tool for communication with nearby neighbors in Belgium, England, France, and Switzerland. Hungarian children learn Russian, the language of the dominant economic and

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political influence on their country. Many African children learn English or French as languages of national unity. Children in India may learn as many as three new languages in school to help foster interstate communication. In many countries throughout the world, a foreign language is used as a medium of instruction for at least part of the school day.

Goals of U.S. Elementary School Foreign Language Programs

Elementary school foreign language programs in the United States reflect a similar diversity in motivation and goals. A number of programs demonstrate an interest in preserving the language of an important regional heritage, such as German in Milwaukee and Cincinnati, Italian in New York City, or Norwegian in Minneapolis. Some Latin programs in the elementary schools, such as those in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., are designed to improve student performance in the use of the English language. Spanish programs in the Southwest and other parts of the country enable children to communicate with an important segment of their own communities. Elementary school language academies in Chicago, part of the Chicago public school system, each offer several languages as a means of introducing children to the values of intercultural communication and diversity. Some of these languages are part of the local heritage, and others have world significance.

Rationale for Elementary School Foreign Language Programs

While local reasons for offering foreign languages to elementary school children may vary, a rationale for programs at the elementary level can be based on a number of commonly accepted elements. One of the few assertions about language learning which remains largely undisputed is that the longer the student is exposed to a foreign language, the more language fluency can be attained. Children who begin language study in the elementary school and also have the opportunity to continue study of the same language for a number of years will be able to develop a considerable degree of practical proficiency in that language. A number of studies (Diaz, Landry, Lopata, Masciantonio, Rafferty) suggest that foreign language learning also enhances cognitive development and basic skills' performance for elementary school children. One reason for the improved performance in English language arts among children learning a foreign language may well be that while they are developing the ability to communicate in a different language system, they also learn to see language as a phenomenon in itself.

An increasing awareness of global interdependence has resulted in a curricular emphasis on global education. A foreign language can provide one of the most important bridges to the understanding of other cultures and perspectives. Children between the ages of 7 and 10 may be at a critical stage for the development of cultural pluralism (Yerxa); at age 10 they are reported to be at a maximal degree of openness to people perceived as dissimilar to themselves (Lambert and Klineberg). Finally, as a practical matter, career potential is considerably improved for the individual who combines other skills with fluency in a foreign language. The demands of business and government for skilled professionals with foreign language competence continues to exceed the supply, especially in such critical languages as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. Children who begin the long process of learning another language in the elementary school are in a position to develop both positive attitudes toward people in other cultures and the linguistic tools to communicate with them.

The U.S. Setting for Elementary School Foreign Languages

Unlike most countries, the United States has no national policy on elementary school foreign languages. Local control of the curriculum and goals of education is one of the most distinctive and traditional aspects of American education. National priorities are sometimes expressed through federal funding of special projects, as with the National Defense Education Act in the 1960s and with the Education for Economic Security Act in the 1980s. Yet it is the prerogative of each state and local district to choose to participate in such national efforts or to reject them. With each educational innovation, many districts wait until a clear trend has been established before implementing local programs; some districts seek to be first on the bandwagon and then may discard a new program before others have even tried it. Clearly a factor in the adoption and continuation of elementary school foreign language programs over the past 35 years, this trendiness creates significant problems in teacher preparation. Few colleges and universities can afford to risk the resources necessary to develop programs of teacher preparation for trends which are not yet well established. In the case of elementary school foreign languages, this has meant that many school programs have been developed by teachers who have little background or experience to prepare them for teaching foreign languages to children.

The consequences of the proclivity for following trends are clear in the history of many programs from the 1960s: many failed because communities held unrealistic expectations or because teachers used inappropriate materials and methods and were unprepared to work with elementary school children or to lead local districts in designing an appropriate program. When declining student populations and budget cuts became widespread during the 1970s and 1980s, most programs were not well enough established to withstand fiscal cuts. The new enthusiasm for elementary school language programs will require systematic preparation and coordination to avoid replicating previous disappointments.

Since foreign languages are not typically part of the background of most elementary school teachers, most of those called on to staff elementary school language programs have been prepared to teach languages at the secondary-school level. They are often unprepared to understand the child they are to teach and the school world in which the child lives.

Characteristics of the Child Learner

The single most important fact about the child learner is often unrecognized by the teacher trained to work with adolescents. The child is not just a learner with less experience and sophistication than the teacher. The child actually reasons differently and experiences the world in a dramatically different way than do adolescents and adults. The teacher who works successfully with children of elementary school age has learned to present the language through concrete objects rather than abstract concepts, to plan active, meaningful experiences and surround them with language. Social and cultural situations and concepts from the subjects in the elementary school curriculum can be used to create a meaningful context for language learning experiences, as well as games, songs and rhymes, and experiences with arts, crafts, and sports. Lavish use of visual aids, props, and realia will give children the opportunity for the hands-on experiences that are so important to effective learning.

Second Language Acquisition by Children

In addition to awareness of the special characteristics of the child learner, the teacher must also take into account the recent insights which have been gained about second language acquisition. In the classroom designed to promote second language acquisition, the target language will be the primary means of interaction, providing children with an environment in which the language is used naturally as a real means of communication. Early experiences with the language will emphasize listening comprehension rather than speaking, giving children the opportunity to associate the new language with sounds and expressions. Use of the language by both teacher and students will be primarily for communicative purposes, as a genuine exchange of information, rather than for rote memorization and grammar-based drills.

For children to benefit from the language they encounter in the classroom, they must understand the message being communicated. The teacher ensures this understanding through modifications of the language itself, sometimes referred to as "teacher talk" or "motherese"; through use of gesture, visual aids, and concrete examples; and through the routines and rituals of the lesson and the school day. This language of the classroom environment, called "input" by Krashen and others, is assimilated by students and later drawn on when they are ready to express messages of their own in the target language. Written forms of familiar language can also be used as input, even in early stages of language acquisition, with children who are literate in their first language.

Elementary School Foreign Language Program Models

Second only to the importance of an appropriately prepared teacher is the selection of a program model compatible with the goals and the resources of the school or the community. We now have experience with a variety of types of elementary school foreign language programs and can predict with some confidence the results that can be achieved with each model. Frequency and intensity of exposure to the target language are the most important factors in the level of language learning which can take place. School systems must set realistic goals for their programs, if they are to enjoy solid support for programs designed to meet local needs and priorities.

Immersion Programs

In an immersion approach to foreign language instruction, the usual curricular activities are conducted in the target language. Thus the new language is the medium as well as the object of instruction. Since the first French immersion program was developed in 1965 in St. Lambert, near Montreal, the concept has become so popular that there are now over 170,000 students in Canada enrolled in immersion and over 9,000 students enrolled in more than 30 programs in the United States. The following goals are most commonly identified for immersion programs:

- Functional proficiency in the second language; children are able to communicate in the second language appropriate to their age level.

- Mastery of subject content material of the school district curriculum.
- Cross-cultural understanding.
- Achievement in English language arts comparable to or surpassing the achievement of students in English-only programs.

Research results in Milwaukee (Curtain and Pesola) are similar to those reported in Canadian immersion programs (Swain, Campbell, and Tucker): children in immersion, on tests of English language arts and subject content material, perform as well as or better than their peers who are attending English-only instruction. In addition, they acquire fluency in a second language.

Early total immersion programs usually begin in Kindergarten or the first grade. The second language is used for the entire school day during the first two or three years, and reading is introduced in the second language. Instruction by means of the native languages is introduced gradually, often beginning with English language arts in the second grade, and then the amount of English is increased gradually each year. By sixth grade up to half the day is spent in English and half or more of the day is spent in the second language.

In *middle immersion* or *late immersion* programs, students begin learning by means of the second language in the middle or upper grades. Many students entering middle or late immersion programs have had previous foreign language instruction (30–60 minutes per day).

Partial immersion programs involve use of the second language for instruction for at least half the school day. Concepts taught in one language are usually not repeated in the other language. The proportion of time spent in the foreign language usually remains constant throughout the elementary school years. Children learn to read first in English or sometimes in both languages at the same time.

Two-way immersion programs are similar to regular partial immersion programs except that the students in the class include native speakers of the target language as well as native speakers of English. In addition to the goal that English speakers become functionally proficient in the second language, there is also a goal that the speakers of the other language become functionally proficient in English.

Continuing immersion programs, found at the secondary school level, are designed to maintain the language skills already developed in total or partial immersion programs and to further develop them as much as possible.

FLES Programs (Foreign Languages in the Elementary School)

While FLES has sometimes been used as a general term to refer to all elementary school foreign language programs, it is more appropriately applied to a specific program type. A FLES program is taught five times per week, or sometimes less, for class periods of twenty minutes to one hour or more. It is a continuous, articulated program which provides a foundation for later study at the secondary school level. Minimal instructional time in quality FLES programs is thirty minutes per day, five days per week. Some FLES classes integrate or reinforce concepts from other areas of the curriculum, but, because of time limitations, the focus of these classes is often the target language itself and its cultures.

As in immersion programs, FLES programs have functional proficiency in the second language as a goal, but FLES students cannot attain as high a degree of proficiency as can immersion students. FLES program goals usually include proficiency in listening and speaking, the degree of proficiency depending on the intensity of the program; an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures; and some proficiency in reading and writing, the emphasis and degree varying with the program. There appear to be additional potential benefits to FLES instruction. Recent research (Rafferty) indicates that children learning a foreign language for even 30 minutes per day can experience improved performance in reading and math over students who are not studying foreign languages, even though instructional time in these subjects is reduced because of the foreign language instruction.

Content-Enriched FLES

In some FLES programs the basic language curriculum is augmented with subject content taught in the second language, and more than an hour a day but less than half the day is spent in the second language. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen point out the significant impact on language acquisition of exposure to the target language as the medium of instruction. The lesser amount of time spent in teaching subject content by means of the language distinguishes this model from the immersion models; it differs from other forms of FLES in that there is a greater emphasis on subject content instruction than on language instruction *per se*.

In the content-enriched FLES program it is possible to achieve functional language proficiency to a greater degree than in a regular FLES program because of the range of topics covered and the greater amount of time spent in language use. There is an additional goal of mastery of the subject content taught through the second language.

FLEX Programs (Foreign Language Exploratory or Experience)

FLEX programs are self-contained, short-term language experiences ranging in length from three weeks to one year. They may be found at both elementary school and middle/junior high school level. Exploratory programs have many variations, reflecting a wide range of school-system goals and priorities, but they tend to share the following goals:

- introduction to language learning
- awareness and appreciation of foreign cultures
- appreciation of the value of communicating in another language
- enhanced understanding of English
- motivation to further language study

Many of the variations in FLEX programs result from the differing emphases given to these goals. At one extreme is the *general language course*, a course *about* language taught largely in English. An introduction and orientation to the nature of language and language learning, it includes the goals of cultural understanding but provides for only very limited speaking experience in the language. This type of course often includes exposure to all the modern or classical languages available for later study in the school system, as well as some related systems such as American Sign Language, Morse code, and computer languages.

At the other extreme is the course which introduces language primarily through a high-quality language-learning experience. This introduction may be in one language that students may later choose for sequential study. Even if there is no opportunity for further study, the experience with the language and culture is valued for itself and for its contribution to the curriculum.

The *language potpourri* provides a limited, introductory experience in two or more languages—modern, classical, or in combination—that will later be available as a sequential program. It may bring all the languages together in a single sequence, as a part of the same learning experience, or it may be structured to offer a series of experiences with different languages over a period of a year or more. It may emphasize a high-quality language-learning experience and be conducted primarily in the target language, or it may emphasize cultural and analytic goals and rely heavily on English as the medium of instruction. The language potpourri is often team taught, using specialists in each language. The effectiveness of this type of course is likely to be severely limited if the same teacher is responsible for teaching all languages, especially those in which the teacher has little or no direct experience.

Auxiliary Language Programs

Not all elementary school language programs take place under school sponsorship or within the school day. Summer camps, before- and after-school programs, ethnic Saturday or after-school programs, immersion weekends, summer daycamps, and private tutoring programs are all found throughout the country. They are often sponsored by parent or community groups or fraternal organizations. They may be structured in a variety of ways, some of which will fall into the categories described above. Some auxiliary programs have developed a highly sophisticated structure and curriculum, while others have relatively limited goals and short duration. In some communities parent and child enthusiasm for an auxiliary program has led to the establishment of an elementary school language program within the curriculum of the local school. Other auxiliary programs, such as immersion camps and weekends, serve to reinforce the school experience in a nonacademic setting.

Implications of Program Choice for the Foreign Language Sequence

Creating a smooth transition from foreign language programs at one level of schooling to those at the next has long been one of the great challenges facing the language-teaching profession. Each of the program models described above has significant—and different—implications for middle and junior high school programs and for senior high school offerings. Immersion students are capable of functioning at a fairly sophisticated level of communication in the target language, and would be well served by continued opportunity to study subject content in the target language and by language arts experiences to refine their target language skills. Graduates of FLES programs or content-enriched FLES programs in which they have experienced at least 150 hours of high-quality language instruction will require a continuation program similar to that of a level-two secondary-school class, although their experiences and their skills will be different from those of secondary students who have had a similar number of hours of school contact with the language. Both FLES and immersion graduates would benefit from opportunities to learn subject content in the target language at the secondary school level.

Graduates of FLEX and auxiliary programs that have emphasized language learning also require special attention when they arrive in the middle or junior high school. When their previous language experiences are taken seriously and used as the basis for further development in their "beginning" language course, the most desirable possible learning environment can result.

No matter how much or how little of the foreign language has been acquired at the elementary school, it is most appropriate to plan a middle or junior high program focused on communication in the target language rather than on grammar and syntax. Because so many middle-school children are still concrete thinkers, or in early stages of formal operations, these may be the worst possible years in which to deal with the abstractions of grammar for the first time. Further, the failure to build on the gains and the enthusiasm developed in the elementary school is both demotivating and short-sighted. Programs that develop experiences allowing young people to use their language proficiency in an increasing variety of meaningful settings, especially relating to the local and world communities, will address both the developmental and the linguistic needs of young adolescent learners. Foreign language teachers at all levels must be prepared to work together to develop the best possible total language program, based on the needs and the skills of the students and the resources of the staff and the school setting.

Lessons from Immersion Classrooms

The elementary school foreign language teacher of the 1990s and beyond has a new set of models and goals for foreign language instruction. The success and popularity of immersion programs offer insight into the potential for language programs at every level of intensity. Foreign languages can be learned when they are the vehicle for gaining general skills and knowledge, perhaps even more effectively than when they are taught in isolation. The foreign language can be used in activities for developing higher-order thinking skills—children who use a foreign language to classify in several ways instead of to conjugate verbs will learn the language more effectively and experience cognitive growth as well. When the foreign language teacher introduces or reinforces important concepts from the general elementary school curriculum, the language class becomes an integral part of the entire school program and will be seen as an enhancement to the attainment of broad curricular goals. At the same time, children become more proficient in the foreign language itself than would be possible if the language were taught directly, in isolation from the rest of the school program. Goals of social development can be reinforced through cooperative group work in the foreign language class as students are placed in a position where they are motivated to communicate with one another.

Teaching any part of the curriculum through the medium of a foreign language places special demands on the language teacher, who must plan activities both for the content goals and for acquiring the language needed to meet those goals. Extra time and attention will be given to providing concrete experiences and to eliciting feedback on the learning that has taken place. The outstanding results of this approach to elementary school foreign language teaching make the extra effort needed to plan lessons with both language and content goals worthwhile.

Teaching Culture and Global Education

No single goal for foreign languages in the elementary school is more frequently cited than that of cultural understanding or global awareness. As is the case with other parts of the curriculum, children learn about culture most effectively through meaningful experiences with cultural practices rather than through discussion, slides, reports, and reading. Because the language itself is the single most important evidence of the culture available to the children, it provides both an important starting point and the obvious vehicle for learning culture. Artifacts, customs, celebrations, and personal representatives of the culture can become a part of daily classroom experiences. Letter, tape, and picture exchanges with children from the target culture can bring new meaning and importance to the experience of learning a language. Most important, real information from the culture must be a daily part of the activities of the classroom. Sometimes cultural information can be the object of instruction in the same way that math or social studies curriculum content might provide the focus. Cultural practices like bowing or handshaking can be employed as a part of daily routines and classroom activities. Real objects from the culture can effectively enhance the classroom atmosphere and serve as tools and concrete examples for learning experiences.

Testing and Evaluation of Elementary School Foreign Languages

As foreign language programs at the elementary school level set higher goals for themselves, and as teachers work program-wide in grades K–12 to develop cohesive, well articulated programs, it becomes increasingly important to be able to measure the language and concept achievement of language students. Teachers have traditionally been much better prepared to present materials than to evaluate what children have learned. The foreign language profession has recently begun to distinguish between language proficiency, or the global skills that enable an individual to communicate in the language, and language achievement, the attainment of specific language objectives that have been taught in a given classroom over a limited period of time. There is an urgent need for appropriate measures of evaluating language proficiency for children in all models of elementary school foreign language programs so that programs can be better planned, articulated, and assessed.

Given the changing priorities and expectations of elementary school foreign language programs, new approaches and standards for achievement testing are also needed. The communicative goals of elementary school foreign language programs cannot be measured with traditional test items based on grammar, single-item identification, and recitation. Both teacher preparation and research must address this issue promptly in order to develop the tools needed to help teachers measure what they are being encouraged to teach.

Immediate Challenges for the Profession

The elementary school foreign language classroom in the 1990s and beyond has the potential for becoming an integral and integrative component of the elementary school curriculum. Even FLES and FLEX programs can assume responsibility for introducing or reinforcing objectives from other content areas; for developing higher-order intellectual skills; for encouraging global awareness and positive intercultural attitudes; for establishing a solid, experience-based language foundation on which high-level language skills can be built. Only teachers who are themselves fluent speakers of the target language and who have meaningful personal experiences in the target culture will be capable of developing and teaching in programs which make the most of this potential. Students preparing to become elementary school teachers should be encouraged to develop fluency in a foreign language and supported in their efforts to improve their skills by living in the foreign culture.

The teacher in this classroom must have the best possible foreign language skills, elementary school teaching skills, and language teaching skills. Especially if isolated in a small system, this teacher must also have the best possible support, with adequate professional resources and contacts and administrative and community support. Only a concerted effort from many directions will make it possible to develop the high-quality foreign language programs which we now have the experience and understanding to create. Successful programs will require the effort of the foreign language teaching profession, school board and administrators' associations, parent groups, business and industry, and funding agencies. In this time of high priority for education and of global relationships requiring great sensitivity, such effort could not be better invested.

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The Integrated Curriculum: Rethinking Elementary School Foreign Language Programs for the '90s

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Virginia Garibaldi Allen

There is a current surge of interest in beginning the study of foreign languages in the elementary school. Not a new idea, a rationale was developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s for the inclusion of foreign languages in the elementary curriculum. That rationale was "discipline driven."

It stemmed from the new research in linguistics and in learning theory, as well as from societal issues that were creating a force to bring about changes in schools. It grew from Bruner's work, which suggested that any discipline could be taught honestly at some level to children. Linguistic studies were giving a sharp and new focus to the oral aspects of language learning. The audiolingual methodology, widely disseminated by NDEA institutes, was believed to be appropriate for young second language learners. In those post-Sputnik days, foreign languages, one of the curricular areas seen to be vital for the national defense, received generous funding from the federal government. Very quickly foreign language study moved into the elementary-school setting.

FLES programs were developed by people who knew the discipline. They were designed to present the language in sequential steps that would allow for the mastery of sound and structure. They promised to deliver a product. Frequently that product was measured in terms of high-school levels. The resulting programs, therefore, were largely designed and executed by those whose area of specialization did not lie in the domain of elementary education, but rather in foreign language. As a result, FLES never was viewed as an integral

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part of the elementary curriculum, but merely as the first step of the longer foreign language sequence. The elementary teacher too frequently saw FLES as an interruption in the already crowded school day, a time when children were removed from the classroom to work with the foreign language specialist. Rarely did that teacher discover the many ways in which foreign language study could support the curricular goals of the elementary course of study.

In order to explore the role that foreign language study can play in the elementary curriculum today, we must examine it within the context of the purposes and philosophy of the elementary school. Almost everyone feels that he or she has a clear understanding of elementary schooling. Usually, it stems from the nostalgic picture of the little red schoolhouse with its perceived emphasis on the 3 Rs. We see echoes of this view in the force of the back-to-the-basics movement that has received so much attention in the past few years. Yet the goals of elementary education go far beyond the narrow objectives of mastering some selected skills. For some, the purpose of schooling is to preserve and pass on received culture. For others, the chief goal of schools is to bring about societal change. In his extensive study of American schools, Goodlad identified the following educational goals as ones on which there is considerable national agreement.

- Academic Goals: In addition to the simple mastery of basic skills, children should be able to gain new ideas through reading and listening and to communicate their thinking through speaking and writing. They should become critical thinkers, able to use a variety of strategies to solve problems and structure new knowledge.
- Vocational goals: Not only should students develop an awareness of career options, but they should develop positive attitudes toward work and an appreciation of the dignity of work.
- Social, Civic, and Cultural Goals: These goals are many and diverse. They include the development of interpersonal understandings, appreciations of cultural differences, and knowledges and skills needed to assume the role of a participating citizen. There is a strong focus on the student's inner growth in areas such as moral development, emotional well-being, creativity, and self-expression.

Even a cursory examination of these goals shows that foreign language study can strengthen elementary-school programs as they emphasize communication, the sharing of ideas through language, and the acquisition of strategies that help children become lifelong learners.

Society's purposes for educating its youth must be meshed with knowledge of how children grow and learn. Clearly there are vast differences between six-year-olds and ten-year-olds; differences in size, abilities, interests, and concerns. The six-year-old who very much wants to be the center of attention and who competes vigorously for a place in the sun will become a ten-year-old who is self-assured and delights in being a member of a team. Any curriculum planning must take into consideration the rapidity with which children change and develop during the elementary-school years.

Of even greater importance is the knowledge of how children learn. Piaget has greatly influenced our understanding of children's intellectual growth. He has shown us that children are not passive receptors of information, but that they interact with the world about them to create their own reality. Children's perceptions of that reality may be quite different from those of adults. Piaget has demonstrated that children do not learn by being "told," but by reaching out, acting on their environment, and assimilating with their existing schema the new understanding they are acquiring. This structuring and restructuring of knowledge marks the path of intellectual growth. The way children make these connections, which Duckworth has called "the having of wonderful ideas," goes far beyond the amassing of information.

Foreign language programs for children must be different in both content and kind from those designed for older learners. They must take into account children's growing and changing interests as well as the way children learn. The three broad types of foreign language programs for elementary-school children may be described primarily in terms of the time and concentration devoted to the language in the classroom. Foreign Language Experience (FLEX) programs are viewed as introductory. They have as their purpose the creation of an interest in the study of foreign language and the development of greater cultural awareness. Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs help children achieve oral proficiency in the second language. Reading and writing are not central but are used to support oral language acquisition. FLES programs are viewed as the beginning steps of the foreign language sequence. In immersion schools the elementary curriculum is taught in the second language. Students are expected to master the content of the regular curriculum through the medium of the second language and acquire a near-native fluency. By 1983, 16 school systems had developed immersion education programs (DeLorenzo and Gladstein). Numbers of other school systems are making either FLES or FLEX programs a part of the elementary school experience.

If the foreign language programs that are now entering the elementary schools are to fare better than those of the past, those planning the programs need a thorough understanding of the research currents that are affecting the education of children.

New knowledge of children's acquisition of language and literacy is bringing about some major changes in the elementary school. While in the 1950s and 1960s changes in education programs were discipline-driven, the current inquiries focus on process. How do children take on language? (Lindfors) What is the difference between first and second language acquisition? (Krashen; McLaughlin) What is the difference between the way language is used at home and in school? (Heath; Wells) What is the reading process? (Goodman; Smith) What is the writing process? (Graves; Calkins) What are the strategies that children use as they move into literacy? (Clay; Read; Bissex)

This focus on process has led to some dramatic changes in the philosophy of elementary schooling on the part of many. There is a move away from the teaching of segmented skills and a thrust toward integrated learning experiences (Fox and Allen; Goodman; Newman). This is perhaps best illustrated by the development of "whole-language" programs by teachers who view language as a social activity. These teachers believe that children learn language not by talking about it but by using it for real purposes. Authentic experiences provide real reasons to question, explain, record, and describe. Real books with rich language are the sources of reading rather than basal readers with controlled vocabulary. Learning is an integrated process. Reading and writing are viewed as two sides of the same coin. Observation has taken on a new dimension as it is used to inform the instruction of children. The teacher's role is not to "tell" and "drill," but to structure the environment in ways that will support children in their use of all aspects of language.

Along with this change in perspective, there are other changes that need to be taken into account. The schools themselves are quite different from those of 30 years ago. The school population then was the homogeneous one of the neighborhood. Desegregation, heavy influxes of refugee and other immigrant groups, and the mainstreaming of handicapped students have created a diverse school community. New demands are being made on schools today. A sharp focus on accountability is bringing about a greater dependence on test scores and a call for quick results. The curriculum is burgeoning. Computer literacy, drug education, sex education are all seen as vital areas of study. It is essential that the rationale for the inclusion of foreign language study in the elementary curriculum be one that not only demonstrates the value of acquiring a second language but also shows how second language programs fit within and offer significant support to the total educational framework of the elementary school.

The approaches used for the instruction of children in a foreign language during the 1950s and '60s do not fit with current knowledge of children's language development. It is possible, however, to develop foreign language programs that meet the needs of children at various stages of development. Further, these programs can focus on helping children acquire the attitudes and strategies that will allow them to acquire a real proficiency in a second language.

The FLEX model is an ideal one to support children's exploration of both language and culture. FLEX has received little attention from researchers, probably because these programs vary greatly on so many dimensions. Materials are generally developed by the teacher. The time allotted to these programs can vary from a short unit or minicourse to classes that meet throughout the school year. Instruction in FLEX programs has been provided by the regular classroom teachers, high school foreign language students, interested parent volunteers, and native speakers from the community, among others. It is easy to dismiss FLEX as not worthy of too much research effort because its goals are limited and its format so varied. Because of its flexibility, however, FLEX can play a significant role in developing both greater cultural awareness and understanding of language as well as helping children acquire an interest in learning a second language.

FLEX can be linked closely with the elementary-school curriculum. Classroom and FLEX teachers working together can develop opportunities for children to acquire in-depth knowledge about specific aspects of another culture. One might explore the theme of childhood, for example. How do children in another culture live? What are their homes and their school day like? What stories do they love? What games do they play? What do they eat for supper? Such explorations will take children far beyond the information on culture in a single textbook. It will lead them to read a variety of books–information books, folktales, poetry. It will bring about explorations in art, music, movement, and drama. It will encourage interviews with natives of that culture. While much exploration will be through the medium of English, a central part of the study can be the language. Children can learn how they would live if they were a member of the culture studied. To do so, they would acquire certain kinds of language. Some of the language learned would be similar to that now taught: greetings, numbers and colors, for example. But, in addition, children would acquire the language needed for certain situations. For example, what would children say at the dinner table? How would they be expected to behave? After supper, what games might they play, and what language would be needed to play them? Together the classroom and FLEX teachers can decide the kinds of cutural exploration they will develop and the way they will integrate the new language. Not an interruption, such a program becomes a focus of study that supports the total curriculum. Children are using both written and oral language for real and important purposes. They are developing concepts that are vital to acquiring a global perspective. Second language study is not peripheral but an integral part of the ongoing study in the classroom.

Because FLEX programs are of short duration, they can allow teachers to draw on the language resources in the school and community. Large numbers of children in American schools speak a home language other than English. FLEX programs would be an ideal place for children to share languages. Children taking English as a second language become resources for second language study. While a school system might not be able to support a full program of Japanese, Portuguese, or Vietnamese, explorations of these languages involving ESL students would be particularly valuable. They would allow native-language input for the American student and give status to the child acquiring English as a second language. By helping children become sensitive to another group's view of life and to its language, a strong FLEX program can instill in children the excitement and pleasure that lie in communicating across cultures.

The immersion model of foreign language learning is a powerful one because it allows children to acquire their second language not by focusing on learning the language itself but by learning through language, by using the language for real purposes. The language does not lie outside the curriculum but serves as the medium through which the curriculum is explored. These programs have been highly praised. Research has shown that the children can and do acquire other subject matter through the foreign language and that they do not fall behind their peers who are studying the same subjects in their native English (Lambert and Tucker; Cohen and Swain). However, there are caveats. Criticisms of immersion are surfacing. Hammerly examined six studies and concluded that immersion programs are linguistic failures. He found the language of immersion students to be defective. He asks, "is the production of graduates who speak and write in an error-laden classroom pidgin—whether "Frenglish" or "Spanglish" or any other such hybrid—a valid education goal?"

While there are many who question the conclusions he drew, Hammerly raises points that need to be considered. Rather than simply condemning the immersion model, as Hammerly has done, it is important to consider the classroom contexts of those schools. If the instruction centers on filling in the blanks in workbook pages or working through texts and if it offers little opportunity for purposeful talk and purposeful writing, it is not surprising that the language of some immersion students might be deficient. A classroom which immerses children in their second language should be one that:

- develops an environment that will help children draw meaning from the context in which they are working

- shapes classroom activities so that they provide not only a spectrum of language opportunities but also nudge children to use language in a variety of ways
- provides an input of predictable and repetitive language on which children can draw
- creates opportunities that allow children to practice language in purposeful ways (Allen, "Developing Contexts")

Now is the time to examine the research on holistic approaches to language learning and to apply that research to second language classrooms. If carried out in classrooms that limit language opportunities, immersion models will not permit children to fully develop their language competence. Second language learners need the rich input of literary language, for the language children use in writing is unlikely to be more sophisticated in either vocabulary or syntax than the language they read or have had someone else read to them (Fox and Allen 206). Research on literacy is supporting teaching approaches that focus on helping children acquire strategies rather than on teaching them skills. In a skills approach the children are taught to use phonics and structural analysis to get at the meaning of a text. In a strategy approach children are taught to use their comprehension of a text to help them identify words. Using what they already know, they predict, sample, and either confirm or modify their interpretation of the text (Goodman; Weaver). The knowledge we are gaining from examining the writing process also has some clear implications. Read's work has shown the importance of invented spelling as children make and test hypotheses about writing. While children eventually move to the conventional forms of spelling, the early imposition of standardized spelling on the novice speller not only interferes with the child's attempts to make sense of the correspondence of sound to symbol but greatly limits the amount of writing the child will produce. The same phenomenon needs to be examined in second language acquisition. What opportunities do children need to achieve real fluency in their new language, that is, to use that language for a variety of functions in both formal and informal settings? Additionally, we need to consider the specific assistance the child learner requires and the points in his or her language development at which help is needed to achieve linguistic accuracy.

The revitalized FLES programs with their goal of developing some oral proficiency in the second language also have not been greatly researched. In a 1988 study, Heining-Boynton surveyed the status of FLES in Michigan. She found that the goals of FLES were understood to be both an appreciation of the culture and the development of speaking skills in the second language.

Though programs differed greatly, the FLES coordinators and teachers who responded to her survey felt that, very largely, those goals were being achieved. Both Heining-Boynton and Rhodes and Schreibstein suggest that the difference between the FLES programs of the 1950s and the revitalized FLES programs today lies to a large degree in the disparity in goals. Current FLES programs, they say, emphasize oral proficiency as earlier programs did not. These researchers further suggest that the early goals for FLES were not realistic. There were expectations that, because they initiated language study early, FLES programs would produce speakers with near-native proficiency. Met claims that, while FLES programs can help children reach certain levels of proficiency, only immersion programs have been able to produce children with fluency in the second language. Clearly, immersion programs provide the richest and strongest support for the development of a second language. FLES programs cannot be expected to match them in helping children acquire the use of the second language with native-like proficiency.

I propose a new focus for FLES. A reasonable and attainable goal for FLES programs would be to help children acquire the strategies they need to be language learners. The knowledge gained in the past few years of children's second language acquisition can support us as we reconsider the purposes and values of FLES. Wong Fillmore studied young Mexican children in a bilingual American school in order to discover how they learned their new language. She was able to identify several strategies they they used as they worked their way into English.

- They assumed what people were saying was directly related to the ongoing situation.
- They learned a few stock expressions and started to talk.
- They looked for patterns that recurred in the language.
- They made the most of the language they had.
- They spent their major effort on getting across meaning and saved the refinements for later.

Krashen hypothesizes that we learn languages by attending to comprehensible input. The language may be understandable because of a strong and supportive context or because the learner and the speaker share knowledge or experience. For language growth to occur, it is important that the learner receive input that is not only comprehensible but slightly beyond his or her current level of competence.

A FLES model that had as its goal to teach children how they can learn a language would need to provide a rich input of language and create opportunities for children to use language for authentic purposes. Such a program would begin by helping children develop a bank of language around a theme. The FLES teacher is often the only source of the language. One important role for the teacher is to provide the language the children will need, which may be presented in a variety of ways: dialog, narratives, labeling, describing, or explaining. For example, a group of lessons might be focused on foods. In addition to learning the names of food items, children could also learn the phrases needed to take surveys to discover favorite foods or most-disliked foods. The children could develop charts to display what they learned. A grocery store made up of cans and boxes labeled in the new language can provide opportunities to learn the language for making a purchase. Children will discover that the new language can be used to gather information and to communicate what they have learned.

FLES can go much further, however, in helping children discover language-learning strategies. Books in the new language would be shared. *Stone Soup* and *Strega Nona* are picture books well known to American children. Both these folktales, which have food as a theme, are available in French and Spanish as well. These stories, read and reread, provide large, cohesive chunks of language that are comprehensible because they are familiar, the illustrations support and extend meaning, and the language is repetitive and predictable. Such listening experiences can help children discover that they can understand by attending to the supporting illustrations. They will also find that they begin to pick up repetitive bits of language.

The children can prepare "Stone Soup" or Strega Nona pasta with all directions and explanations given in the second language. The linguistic input given by the teacher is authentic, not edited textbook language. The children can dictate recipes after they have prepared the dish. They can develop booklets about their experiences. Again, though the language that supports the task will include many expressions the children do not know, they will be able to understand because of the strong context. Assisted by the bank of language from the preceding FLES classes and buoyed by the rich, supportive, shared experience, children will learn they can not only comprehend but participate actively in second-language experiences.

Only a teacher with native or near-native fluency could provide the kind of spontaneous language that the less structured parts of such a FLES program would require. FLES teachers whose language proficiency is less than this could enlist the support of a native speaker for that specific portion of a program, However, it is vital that the teacher play the central role in planning the experience and later in helping children discover what they learned about the language. Such experiences, planned well and used at various points in the program, could do much to help children become language learners.

The program just described differs from past programs in several significant ways. Children would be encouraged to try out language, to hypothesize, to take risks. Reading and writing would be treated as natural parts of the language-acquisition process and not taught as separate skills. The foreign language experiences of the second grader and the fifth grader would be different because they would be shaped by the needs of their age groups. Assessment of such programs would center on observing how children attend to and use language rather than on the number of structures and vocabulary items acquired. One vital aspect of the teacher's role would be to make explicit what children had learned, both about language and about language learning. After children had completed a thematic unit, such as the one described, a teacher could, through discussion, help children think about what helped them understand the language, what helped them remember, and what encouraged them to try out the language. Children would be discovering strategies that will help them continue to learn the language they are exploring and feel confident about themselves as language learners.

While it would be a strong base for a long sequence of foreign language instruction, such a program offers more. It can help children discover they do indeed have the ability to learn a second, third, or fourth language. They will have acquired the strategies that will assist them in doing so. They will use the context surrounding language to help them capture meaning. They will have learned that by listening for patterns they can acquire useful chunks of language that allow them to start talking. They will have found out it is safe to take risks. Most important, they will know that one learns language by using it.

There are other ways to design programs to meet the special needs of children. This is a moment to work together, to invent, and to experiment. Collaboration should begin with forums for elementary teachers. It can start by encouraging those in foreign language and those in elementary education to publish in and read each other's journals and to attend and present at each other's professional meetings. We must listen and learn from each other. Foreign language educators and elementary teachers should jointly develop FLES programs so that the foreign language experiences will support the total elementary program. Foreign language teachers can demonstrate the variety of ways to introduce languages to the elementary schools and the values and purposes of each model. Elementary teachers can share their knowledge of children and examine the curriculum to discover how languages can support and extend the concepts they wish to teach.

Goodlad closed his study of American schooling by discussing how we might improve our schools and move beyond them as they exist today. Several of his suggestions have strong implications for foreign language programs. He believes that we need to be creative in staffing our schools. Elementary schools, for example, might wish to hire teachers who, in addition to their general teaching abilities, can bring specialized backgrounds to the faculty and serve as a resource to the whole school. The ability of an elementary teacher to speak another language fluently would be seen as an important resource. Goodlad suggests creativity in scheduling school time. Blocking time in new and more flexible ways will allow us to broaden and deepen the educational experiences we provide. This more fluid use of time should provide new opportunities to include a second language in the elementary school. He further suggests that we reexamine how and why we group children. It might be helpful to group children to use the multilingual resources that many children provide the American classroom. Finally, Goodlad proposes that we develop key schools that would be linked to universities and to each other in a collaborative network. Key schools would develop programs and share descriptions and evaluations of their educational practices. Innovative programs in foreign language could be piloted and refined in such schools.

The role that foreign languages can play in the elementary curriculum is both important and valuable. We need to look forward to exploring the many intriguing and exciting possibilities.

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The Ages and Learning Stages of Children and Their Implications for Foreign Language Learning

Myriam Chapman, Elizabeth Grob, and Mari Haas

> Elementary age children are avid for information and enjoy gaining skills. But they learn best when the appeal of the content is real for their age and stage, when the skill has some observable value, and when the style of learning is the childhood style of action.
>
> Dorothy Cohen, *The Learning Child*

Elementary- through middle-school children (ages 4–13) are complicated beings. Each year brings new growth in their thinking processes, their physical development, their social skills, and their sense of self. Each new age reveals a new stage of learning through which the child must move at his or her own rate and in his or her own manner.

Many qualities define children in the various stages of development, but the themes are always the same: autonomy and competence, intellectual and physical growth, the formation of a strong social self. Although the issues are similar for all children, they are manifested differently at each stage of their development. Teachers, including foreign language teachers, need to be knowledgeable about the stages through which children progress so that they can make curriculum developmentally appropriate. Learning is most effective when teaching strategies are consistent with the stages of children's growth. This holds true for teaching foreign languages as well as any other subject. When the subject matter being taught also matches the interests of the children and

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supports the regular classroom curriculum, the target language becomes a base for real communication.

In this paper we will examine who the children are at each age—their physical, cognitive, and affective characteristics—and how the learning of a foreign language fits in with their growth.

The Theory of Cognitive Development, Jean Piaget

The noted developmental psychologist, Jean Piaget, has contributed greatly to our understanding of how children think. His theory of cognitive development focuses on developmental changes in how children think about the world, how they mentally represent and organize information. Piaget believed that as children grow, they do not just acquire more facts, but they think in qualitatively different ways than at an earlier age. Children, according to Piaget, add to their base of experience as they actively strive to understand their environment and build on their own knowledge. They also respond better to a challenge in their learning, not so great that they cannot understand the information, but a step above their present understanding so that their base of knowledge grows. He describes four stages of cognitive growth: the sensorimotor (0–2 years), the preoperational (3–7 years), the concrete operational (7–10 years), and the stage of formal operations (11–15 years). These stages, which progress from egocentric and concrete thinking to logical and abstract thinking, are reflected throughout this paper.

The Four and Five Year Old

Four and five year olds are active and friendly people with few inhibitions. They are eager learners, interested in just about everything, especially when the topic relates to themselves, their peers, or their family. They love fantasy play, although the boundaries between fantasy and reality are not yet clearly defined at this age. They generally have short attention spans, but can play for a long time when they are doing something they particularly enjoy. They are still getting acquainted with their bodies. Large motor skills such as skipping and hopping are a challenge, and they need many concrete experiences to strengthen them. Small motor skills are still developing. Gripping a pencil or cutting with scissors is a challenge to these children.

Four and five year olds delight in language. They are internalizing new vocabulary, through visual images, physical experience, and concrete examples. While they are still working on their own language development, they are eager to learn new words in other languages as well. What a perfect age to introduce a foreign language! The children are eager and playful and they have the facility to imitate the sounds they hear. Repetition is also important. Children delight in learning repetitive chants, rhymes, and songs in the foreign language and usually have excellent accents.

Four and five year olds love dramatic play. For them the boundaries between fantasy and reality are shaky. Becoming an animal or a truck or a fairy princess is part of the process of learning about the world. Because uninhibited four-five year olds love performing, puppets, costumes, masks, and dress-up clothes are particularly effective tools for the foreign language teacher. Imitating sounds, dramatizing concepts, songs, and simple stories are good activities in the classroom. In fact, learning takes place for the four and five year olds primarily when they are physically involved and their imagination is stimulated.

Methods in which children learn language by physically responding to commands such as Total Physical Response (TPR) are ideal for this age. Fours and fives who are working hard on learning to jump and skip, hop and gallop, get great satisfaction from following these commands in a second language. Other large motor skills can also be enhanced. Rolling a ball to a classmate or passing an object around the circle improves eye-hand coordination. In this way simple skills such as these are developed while children are learning another language.

In addition to developing their physical skills, four and five year olds are engaged in making order of the world around them. By sorting and classifying, they begin to make sense of things and to understand relationships. Foreign language teachers can satisfy this need by sorting and classifying with the children as they teach new and relevant vocabulary. The teacher can teach the color red by having the children find all the red vehicles in the block area, or by making a graph of how many children have red boots or shoes that day. Topics such as the family, clothing, and transportation can also be approached in this way. Children can arrange the members of the family in terms of boys and girls, hair color, or eye color. They can study vehicles by sorting and grouping different types of buses, cars, and trucks. Numbers up to ten, which are taught in the child's first language at this age can be reinforced in the foreign language in a multitude of ways. Youngsters take endless joy in rediscovering that they have five fingers on each hand, a pair of eyes and ears, and only one nose! By using realia, pictures, objects, and the child's own body the concepts remain concrete and understandable.

Four-five year olds love to be silly. "Put your foot on your head! Touch your belly button with your elbow!" These commands can bring down the four-five year old house, as they are learning the body parts in the new language. But silliness can get out of hand at this age. Teachers of young children need to know when and how to set limits. Young children need real structure and clarity in order to be creative and feel confident in their learning. Projects such as collages (of round things, or big and little items), cooking, sewing, or puppet making help focus the four-five year old's attention, and, when clearly explained and designed in the foreign language, are rich activities for the early-childhood language curriculum. The foreign language teacher should also remember that these children need praise. And because they are both young and active, fatigue is always a consideration. The teacher needs to limit the class time and end while the children are still able to be attentive.

Like the regular classroom teacher, the foreign language teacher, who teaches developmentally appropriate curriculum, is constantly observing and noting the skills and capacities of young children and then reinforcing and extending them. By using the same content as the regular classroom teacher, the foreign language teacher makes language learning real and meaningful to the children. Songs, dances, and realia from other cultures add another dimension to their learning experience and enrich the children by expanding their world.

The Six and Seven Year Old

Six-seven is a transitional age. The child is beginning to emerge from his egocentric view of the world, although his experiences are still the point of departure for his learning. Children at this age are conceptualizing more. They have more experiences to build on and are able to think about them. They have a longer attention span and can spend more time on a task. At this age, however, children still need many opportunities to be active. In order to provide a well balanced curriculum for six-seven year olds, the foreign language teacher needs to plan many concrete experiences from which children can conceptualize, thereby challenging their thinking skills.

Physically six-sevens are gaining coordination. Most children at this age are refining large motor activities such as skipping or jumping rope. Skills that require considerable eye-hand coordination, such as throwing and catching a ball, can be performed with increasing ease and a great sense of accomplishment. The foreign language teacher can teach games and folk dances that require more complicated and challenging movements.

Small motor skills, such as writing, cutting with a scissors, painting, or manipulating clay are increasingly easy for these youngsters. Activities in the foreign language class that encourage these budding skills are well received. Since they are generally hard workers and can spend a longer time doing projects, painting, making models, working with wood, clay, or paper mache, building with blocks, sewing, and cooking are activities that can be used in the second language classroom. During the course of these projects, the foreign language teacher needs to use lots of active language. He or she gives instructions, supervises the work, encourages children to use the language, and supplies general feedback to the children about their project.

Emotionally, the sixes and the sevens are quite different. Six year olds are active and love to be at the center of things. They are still seeing life very much from their own perspective and have a hard time seeing other points of view. At the same time, six year olds are changing—they are growing more independent and more daring. Yet these very changes make life difficult for them as they struggle between their needs for dependence and independence.

Seven year olds, on the other hand, are quieter and more reflective than they were at six. They are no longer as active and energetic, but rather can seem moody, pensive, even withdrawn. As David Elkind explains in *A Sympathetic Understanding of The Child*, "In a sense one might even say that while at age 6 the child's activities were physical and motor, at age 7 they become increasingly mental ... the scene of action has shifted and now takes place within her mind rather than within her actions space." Child at this age have greater ability to reason, but still need hands-on, concrete experiences to support their thinking.

Socially, sixes and sevens are growing more sensitive to their peer group. No longer are the children the uninhibited actors of before, but rather they react sharply to criticism and even to slight failures. They begin to rely heavily on what others say about them. They are competitive in games, and at six, they hate to lose so much that they might even cheat in order to win, seeing no problems with this strategy. Seven year olds, on the other hand, are becoming conscious of rules and can be rigid, even slavish about them. For the foreign language teacher this stage requires careful thought about the choice of materials and activities so as not to frustrate either of these age groups. With well selected activities, the foreign language teacher can also foster cooperation and a sense of community at a time when children are struggling with these issues.

Friendships are important to six-seven year olds who strive to be accepted by their peer group. Whereas four-five year olds were most influenced by their parents, children at six and seven are beginning to see themselves emerging outside the family. Their perception of adults is also shifting. They no longer see their authority as absolute, but rather as becoming penetrable. Adult-child relationships can be shaky despite these youngsters' continuing need for adult approval. The foreign language teacher can begin to plan some activities where children work with a partner, such as creating a page of a book together.

The range of cognitive skills now is wide. Six-sevens still relish routine and repetition and need it to reinforce their skills. But where the six year old is most likely a struggling reader, many seven year olds can read for content. By seven, language skills are stronger and these learners are more at ease with abstract concepts. If the children have already had real experience with familiar content, such as working with cutouts of the characters on a flannel-board to illustrate

"Goldilocks and the Three Bears," it is possible to introduce reading in the foreign languge. They can then follow the story when it is read to them and can read it for themselves. After such an experience, the teacher can begin to write simple sentences on chart paper in the sequence of the story. Books and songs can also be written and illustrated by the children, reinforcing reading and writing skills.

Fact-finding is important to six and seven year olds. They have a continuing interest in how things happen and why. They rely on direct exploration—trips to a market or a farm, experiments with sinking or floating—as their way of learning. Six-sevens continue to classify things in terms of their concrete qualities, for they are not able to abstract yet. Graphing or sorting, comparing and contrasting are still important activities that the second language teacher can use to teach and reinforce vocabulary as well as higher-order thinking skills. But these skills still need to be practiced with concrete materials or with pictures. Animals, plants, the city, and occupations are all topics that can be introduced in the foreign language class.

The children's relationship to the larger world is expanding and now includes their community, as well as home and neighborhood. Curriculum can reflect this expansion. The foreign language teacher can enrich the child's world by presenting objects, songs, and games of children from other lands. Mapping as a skill is just beginning to make sense for six year olds. Making maps of their classroom and neighborhood is a meaningful task that can be done as a second language activity. However maps of the United States or the world, are still mysterious to them. Even seven-year old children have difficulty differentiating between city, state, and country. The foreign language teacher should remember that children who can sound terrifically knowledgeable when talking about where they have been on vacation or where grandma lives, do not really have a sense of geography. Their language may be ahead of their concepts.

In the same way, six-sevens are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about time. They can talk in general terms about the past, the present, and future, have a sense of the seasons, especially when they are connected to relevant events in their life, such as a birthday or certain holidays. Labelling days of the week has no meaning to the youngsters unless they are directly linked to their life. On Mondays, they go skating; on Fridays, they have music. Teaching the days of the week in a foreign language needs to be tied to the children's own routine.

Like all children, children at six and seven need to experience success and joy in their learning. They will then have the self-confidence to move into the middle years of childhood.

The Eight, Nine, and Ten Year Old

Children aged eight, nine, and ten, the middle years of childhood, are immersed in their own separate culture. They are moving away from their parents toward a separate sense of themselves. Along with their peers, they exist in a world of their own, with its traditions, games, values, loyalties, and rules. Their skills are more established, and they are busy adding to the many facts they already know. They are investigating their relationships to themselves, their peers, and the adults in their lives. By this age, they are ready to take a look at the world beyond their own community.

Middle-years children see the world differently from younger children. They are able to make sense of things, look at all aspects of a situation, integrate parts into wholes, and reorganize information. They can take past experience and apply it to new situations. Their language skills are more versatile, and now they can unscramble words, read run-on sentences, and read things upside down. Thus, studying a foreign language, a linguistic mystery of sorts, adds another dimension to the new skills they are developing. Children often make their own observations about why the endings of words change in a foreign language. Through their exposure to another language, children begin to transfer their discoveries of how language works to their first language.

At this age, children have an increasing mastery of symbols, and they love codes (spoken and written), made-up languages, puns, rhymes, and other revisions of their everyday symbols. The foreign language itself is a code full of secrets children can decipher. Able to think creatively, they are intrigued by finding new ways to represent things. Children studying a foreign language in the middle years of childhood have a ready-made place to concentrate on this novel way of thinking. Rhymes, chants, tongue-twisters, sayings, and poems are a wonderful way to expose children not only to the new language, but also to the cultural nuances that go with them.

Eight year olds tend to be very outgoing, expansive and curious about themselves and others. They move from task to task rapidly, interested in just about everything. They are beginning to be able to judge themselves and others more objectively. They are also very social beings, and friends are at the center of their universe. Eights like to form clubs, gangs, and secret societies, away from the supervision of parents.

At nine, these traits continue to develop and become more intense. But now they can spend more time intently solving a problem. Close relationships with peers grow and they are developing a greater sense of consideration and fairness toward others. Nine year olds can accept their own mistakes and be more responsible for their own actions.

The ten year old, say Gessell, Ilg, and Ames in *The Child from Five to Ten*, is "well balanced and comfortable, both with himself and with those around

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him." These children have mastered many skills, they can do tasks quickly, and they enjoy a mental challenge. They are receptive to information, to broadening ideas, and they can participate in discussions. Looking closely at most ten year olds can give you an indication of the adults they will become.

As middle-years children become more social, their close friendships tend to be with a child of the same sex. Boys usually form larger groups and excel in group sports and games with rules. Girls, in our changing society, are also becoming more involved in sports with boys. Usually, though, girls form smaller, more intimate groups with intense friendships. They like to role-play life situations and put on "shows." The foreign language teacher can direct her activities toward these different interests by playing group games with a theme and by role-playing different situations and stories in class. Children at this age work well in small groups with peers and this can be effective in the foreign language classroom as well.

As these new relationships with friends grow, middle-years children start to feel the impact of social status. Their appearance and the clothes they wear become important to them. They are conscious of the ways in which they are different from other people. They also begin to understand the labels that society can put on them: female, male, rich, poor, small, tall. Middle-years children begin to reflect the opinions and prejudices of the adults who are their models. Some of these opinions are the result of negative and limited experiences and may shape their developing sense of self. In the foreign language classroom, they are getting a look at other people and their culture. Their experiences with this new culture are exciting and positive. Instead of being presented with pictures of foreigners that are at times stereotypical, they are able to get a view of foreign children that is closer to revealing how their lives work. They may find that there are many similarities between children, their communities, and their way of life.

Learning about others can help children with their developing self-concept. At this age, when judging and evaluating others leads to more objective thinking, children studying a foreign language are already seeing the point of view of people from foreign lands and take a look at foreign children from a different perspective. This is a good place for them to develop a more sensitive and educated view, to take a look behind the sometimes oppressive labels placed on people of other cultures.

Eight-year olds "begin to evince an interest in children from foreign lands and delight in learning that they do similar things," writes David Elkind in *A Sympathetic Understanding of the Child*. Children studying a foreign language at this age have a natural entree into this world, and their interest is brought to life. The culture of childhood is not only visible in their own games, chants, rhymes, and traditions, but in those of children from other places.

The curiosity of middle-years children about others includes people from earlier times, heroes, and famous people. Their sense of time has expanded and they are interested in the voyages of the pilgrims and the battles of the native Americans. Heroes and famous people give the children other examples to model themselves after. The foreign language class can follow these themes and add the dimension of heroes from other lands. Graphing and sorting the information about these topics such as the different types of transportation used by the first settlers or the animals living near the Northwest Coast or Pueblo Indians helps children organize this information and vocabulary in the foreign language. Creating murals and dioramas with the children gives the foreign language teacher many opportunities to talk with the students in the target language, to encourage them to speak about their project, and to use language in a meaningful way. Children can write about these projects and read them to the class. It is a good time for reading simple biographies, realistic stories, folk tales, and myths and writing simple books and stories about the content.

Looking at the history of words has its place here also. Children enjoy finding possible relationships between words they are learning in the foreign language and words they already know in their own language. For example, asking children what words in English are similar to "froid" in French, "frieren" in German, or "frio" in Spanish, elicits answers such as "freezing" and "freon." Thus children have discovered relationships between the roots of words. Another play with words involves pointing out foreign words assimilated into English such as "croissant," "frankfurter" and "patio." This can lead to discussions of French and German food and Spanish architecture. Children can begin to see the structure that makes up another language and can make comparisons to their first language. They can discover associations between words in their first and second languages, that words in sentences have order, and that in each language words can be formed differently.

Another skill that emerges at eight and increases at nine and ten is the ability to evaluate one's performance and relationships with others. Children can stand back a bit and look at the things that happen to them and think about the "why" behind them. They also can begin to measure themselves against a set of ideals. At the age of eight, children tend to be more critical than older or younger children. They can make comparisons and evaluations and they often criticize artwork, writing, and academic skills. Many children are self-conscious about their work at this age. They may also feel inhibited about speaking a foreign language imperfectly. At an earlier age, children were less aware of mistakes. It is the job of the foreign language teacher to help children through this stage by providing many non-threatening ways for them to use the language, such as skits and dialogues.

Children at this age can be very literal and feel a sense of justice and fair play. They are moralistic and see an absolute right and wrong. As children reach the ages of nine and ten, they become better able to see events objectively and to distinguish between a specific behavior and the underlying intentions. They are learning to consider another person's point of view. A global perspective of people and places in the foreign language classroom at this time goes hand in hand with the social studies curriculum.

Middle-years children are well into their life-long process of ordering their knowledge about the world by classifying and re-classifying categories of information. The foreign language teacher who has been teaching critical thinking skills along with the language reinforces this process. Learning a foreign language at this age can strengthen organizational skills while learning important language concepts. Children who have been sorting and classifying can do so on a more sophisticated level. They can also add new categories. Food lends itself nicely to this process. Students may have sorted fruit by color, shape, or size. They can then decide which foods are eaten at each meal, sort food by food groups, and go on to discover what vitamins are in each food.

Now, children can do more complex mapping and graphing than they have been capable of in the past. They can read bar graphs and pictographs, collect data, and observe a variety of characteristics of an object. They can then place the object in a group or several groups. At this age, children can make inferences about their observations. These higher-order thinking skills are used daily in the regular classroom and can be used in the foreign language class to give children experience with a variety of vocabulary words.

Working in small groups with peers works well at this age. Middle-years children enjoy chatting with each other. This is a good time to practice oral language skills in the target language. Children can work in pairs or with three or four other children. When given some specific information, they can ask questions, state facts, give commands to each other, and solve problems about it. In this way, the foreign language is used for real communication. Peer work gives children a chance to work independently from their teacher; it also fosters cooperation among the group. Competition, natural at this age, is forgotten for a while.

Middle-years children still need concrete, first-hand experiences from which to generalize. They have a hard time understanding a concept outside their realm of experience or one for which an analogy cannot be made. Doing, making, and building should still be the basis of their daily lessons. To fully grasp a concept, middle-years children need to act on their understanding in a physical way. Manipulatives in the classroom still give the children a basis for the language they are learning. Books and pictures give the children a visual image while records and tapes add an aural association. Field trips, cooking activities, experiments, and art projects can give a rich base for fostering the development of vocabulary in the foreign language while reinforcing concepts in other subject areas.

During the middle-years, children still assimilate more language that is heard rather than read, but this gap is narrowing. Their mastery of reading is opening new sources of information. This stage is appropriate for "language experience stories" in the target language. These stories are created by the children in a class discussion and recorded by the teacher on chart paper about an experience the children have had, such as making fruit salad, or taking a trip. These experience-based stories are used in the English language arts curriculum to open the door to reading and writing. They can perform the same function in the foreign language class.

Now that their learning skills are more established and their sense of self is more solidly defined, middle-years children are ready to take on the challenges of adolescence. As Gessell, Ilg, and Ames note in *The Child from Five to Ten*,

> The foundation and most of the framework of the human action system are laid down in the first decade. The consolidations of those first ten years will not be sloughed off. They will remain an integral part of the action system of the maturing youth. The teens do not transform the child. They continue him.

The Ten, Eleven, and Twelve Year Old

Early adolescence is considered a difficult stage in a child's life because of the many changes it encompasses, from childhood to adolescence, from dependency to increased autonomy, from learning experientially to thinking abstractly, from the body of childhood to puberty. It poses a number of challenges for the teacher. But the rewards of teaching the early adolescent are also great. Lively, enthusiastic, and curious, early adolescents are eager to please, although less willing than younger children to give affection to authority figures. They want to tackle new ideas; they are energetic and positive; they are good, unselfconscious mimics; in many ways they are excellent language learners. Foreign language teachers need to see the early adolescent as someone who is engaged in continuing the struggle toward selfhood that is a part of every human being's development.

Within this age group, there is wide variation. At one extreme is the eleven-year old boy who is still involved in childhood issues; at the other extreme is the thirteen year old girl whose behavior anticipates the responses of the older teenager. On the whole, however, these children are more like each other than dissimilar. We have therefore chosen to focus on the twelve year old, the seventh grader, as the most representative of this group.

Although many educators believe this is too late to take advantage of children's natural ability to mimic the sounds of a new language, it is in seventh grade that many children in this country begin the study of a second language. The decision to start another language in the seventh grade is based in part on the cognitive changes from concrete to more abstract thinking that most children are beginning to make at this age. The experiential mode that forms the basis of most learning in the early years is shifting. The twelve year old no longer needs to see and touch and feel in order to know, but when beginning a foreign language, manipulatives and pictures still help children begin to learn the new language. Their overall thinking is no longer grounded so intensely in personal experience. Once they know the basic vocabulary, they can generalize from the particular, be more objective, more flexible, and less literal. They can also think about language, their native language as well as other languages.

Traditionally some measure of grammar is introduced in seventh-grade English classes and in foreign language classes as well. Whereas children at any age can learn to speak a new language, it is not until a child is twelve-thirteen years old that he begins to see language as a system. It is at this point that grammar in the foreign language can make sense to the child. However, there can be wide variation in the degree to which children can deal with abstract concepts in sixth and seventh grade. In a typical seventh-grade classroom, many students are familiar with the word "adjective," some can pick one out in a sentence, few really understand its function. The practice students get identifying and using parts of speech in the foreign language often clarifies their understanding of these concepts in English. The foreign language teacher who includes grammar in the curriculum needs to know where children are in their cognitive development, in order to teach effectively. Cooperation between the English and the foreign language teacher is especially valuable at this time. Often children studying a foreign language learn their first grammar concepts in that language and transfer this knowledge to the English class—to the delight of their teachers.

In spite of greater flexibility in their thinking, few early adolescents can tolerate ambiguity. Pattern and order are important to them; they want rules that apply to every situation. Too many exceptions discourage them, but regularities in the pattern of a foreign language can be appealing and reassuring.

The shift toward formal operations (Piaget) also means that children can begin to appreciate what a language tells them about the people who speak it. New cultures reveal themselves not only through peoples' activities but through their languages as well. Twelve year olds are often shocked when they learn that there are different forms of address in many languages. They wonder what that means about the other culture. Are Spanish-speaking people less friendly than Americans? What happens if a French child makes a mistake addressing another person? What do people think of her? These are important issues to the twelve year old who is observing the world and trying to determine her own place in it. These questions are never idle; the foreign language teacher, like the classroom teacher, needs to be sensitive and alert to the meaning behind children's questions.

Children's natural curiosity about other places, customs, and people finds a perfect outlet in the foreign language class. But the experience can be unsettling as well. In the foreign language class, early adolescents are exposed to a new set of attitudes at a time when they are only beginning to identify and consolidate their own. The more closely the culture they are studying resembles their own, the more ambivalent twelve year olds may be toward differences. The customs of the ancient Chinese are more acceptable than the customs of German teenagers, how they dress, or wear their hair, or greet each other. Cultural differences need to be presented tactfully at this age; similarities should be stressed; value judgments avoided. Role-playing and acting out situations are effective ways to begin to bridge the cultural gap. Although it is difficult to give children authentic cultural experiences in the classroom, children who always shake hands with their classmates when they say "Bonjour" are trying on a piece of another culture. Children who learn to dance the traditional version of "La Bamba" have an idea of what their Spanish-speaking peers might see performed at a fiesta. Because of seventh grader's hyper-sensitivity to differences, whether cultural or individual, this is a good time to team up with the social studies teacher to explore the values of other people and places, thus making these issues a bit less threatening.

Children's perception of the universe as a safe, familiar place is beginning to shift at this age. The egocentricity and sense of invulnerability that characterizes younger children has disappeared. As their universe is expanding beyond the family and the community to the world around them, the universe feels like a less orderly place too. It is important that the foreign language classroom provide a safe and stable environment. With so many internal changes to contend with, early adolescents crave order from without. Foreign language teachers need to be firm and clear in their expectations, consistent and, above all, fair.

Early adolescents are authoritarian. They have an acute sense of fairness and loyalty. Rules are rules, and teachers as well as students must abide by them. Promises made must be kept; procedures agreed on must be followed. If changes are unavoidable, reasons must be given. Early adolescents are reasonable; they want to understand. They are not really intractable or rebellious. But they do want the walls that enclose their turbulent universe to be solid. Not expecting teachers to be infallible, the early adolescent is often relieved to hear his teacher admit an error; it gives him permission to make mistakes also.

In their struggle to achieve autonomy, early adolescents crave both freedom and responsibility. They want to know that they can have a say in the organization of their life, at home and at school. They value the freedom that accomplishing responsible tasks gives them. They like to be able to help plan and make projects. The foreign language teacher can encourage children to participate in manageable classroom duties: collecting homework, distributing papers, taking attendance, putting the date on the board, occasionally acting as the teacher. With the help of the teacher, the children can plan parties, outings, and trips. It is remarkable how trustworthy and responsible a group of twelve year olds can be when they are planning something they really want to do.

Early adolescents are task oriented. They enjoy and have a real tolerance for well defined tasks. They can commit themselves to a project and finish it if the project is not too long. Open-ended projects can overwhelm seventh-graders. The teacher can help them know that there are boundaries and limits to their projects. Nor can projects be abandoned without proper closure: that calendar for the month of November must be hung in the classroom; those geographic models must be finished and, if possible, displayed. Early adolescents, who are sometimes unsure about the value of what they doing, need to feel that the teacher values the work she assigns and the job they have done.

Preferred learning styles have emerged by this age. It is possible to see, in the seventh-grade classroom, children who work best independently, in small groups, or with the teacher for support. There are children who must see examples and write everything down; others prefer to listen in order to learn. There are children who need a calm and quiet classroom and others who can function in a certain amount of noise. There are children who like the classroom warm and others who prefer it cold. Accommodating everyone's learning style is, of course, impossible, but the foreign language teacher should be aware of learning preferences and be ready with a number of different strategies. For a visual learner, making tag board puzzles out of sentences is a good way to help him understand the structure of a sentence. Tapes a child can play at home, brightly colored signs attached to the blackboard with magnets provide the auditory and the visual learner with learning aids.

Intense and frequently shifting friendships occur at this age. Early adolescents, engaged in a quest for identity, are starting to look for support from their peers. In the complicated and ongoing task of separating from their parents, they depend on peers to reflect a positive, realistic image of themselves. In the classroom, this means that social issues are often prominent. Friends want to sit together; enemies (who may have been friends the day before) must be kept apart. One way to deal with the alliances in the classroom is to encourage peer work. Peer work has the same advantages for the early adolescent as it does for the younger child. It frees the teacher to walk around the room, listening, observing, helping students, and speaking with them. It involves all the children in listening and speaking. It gives shyer students a chance to talk without the embarrassment of facing a class. Peer activities may be very simple: two students may be working out a schedule for a weekend visit to a favorite location. Or it may be more complex: a group preparing a skit to present at an assembly. Peer activities may be short or ongoing. In any case, a lot of language is generated and real communication occurs naturally.

Developmentally, peer work encourages socialization and the early adolescent's need for independence from authority. It fosters cooperation among the children and tolerance for differences and difficulties. Such activities are encouraged in the lower grades, but tend to be overlooked in the upper elementary grades. But at an age when peer relationships are so important to children, peer work is a valuable way to harness a normal developmental need.

The principal danger in peer work is that it can underscore exclusiveness and selectivity. The foreign language teacher who is concerned about these issues in his classroom can intervene in the formation of groups, breaking up groups that are too exclusive, ensuring that there is a mix of boys and girls in a group, seeing to it that less popular children are included. Of course, the teacher can also change groups for academic reasons, pairing strong and weaker students.

Lastly, early adolescents, like younger children, need to engage in some physical activity in the classroom. We expect children to sit quietly for too long. Even twelve year olds need to move. TPR is one of the most attractive solutions to the problem of preadolescent restlessness. It emphasizes learning through the body, which is still developmentally appropriate. It provides listening experiences that are essential. It is a group activity that is non-threatening and entertaining.

There are other activities that encourage children to leave their seats. Skits and role-playing are always engaging. Re-creations in the classroom of situations such as a news conference, a party, or an interview are effective in getting children to talk to other children. Fantasy re-creations, a picnic at Chapultapec Park, riding the Paris métro, an afternoon at the beach, allow children to use their imagination and their language skills creatively.

Early adolescents are Janus-faced, sometimes turning their heads toward childhood, at other times, looking forward to adolescence. It is hard to remember that such shifts are part of the normal push toward maturity, but by being knowledgeable about where children are on the developmental scale, the foreign language teacher can participate in the early adolescent's growth and make the most of his genuine gifts as a language learner. The more educated the teacher is about children, the better decisions the teacher can make. In *The Middle Years of Childhood*, Patricia Minuchin admonishes all teachers, "It is important to be informed about the potentialities and limitations that characterize children at different stages, the processes involved in their behavior, and the factors that influence growth."

The elementary foreign language teacher participates in a double process, imparting knowledge of another language, and, at the same time, dealing with the developmental needs of young children. The best teaching closely matches the child and provides an atmosphere, a content, and an approach that enhances his learning. Children who learn another language in this fashion are enriched in many ways. Affectively, they experience the joy of communicating in a new language and gain the confidence that comes with mastering a new skill. Cognitively they perfect and develop thinking skills, enhance their understanding of English, and extend their work in social studies by developing a sensitivity to other cultures that will shape their understanding of the world. In short, foreign languages need not be considered an isolated subject. When taught with a knowledge and appreciation of children, foreign language instruction can support and enrich the development of the whole child.

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Learning Language through Content: Learning Content through Language

Myriam Met

While the debate over the place of foreign language instruction in elementary schools has waxed and waned over the last three decades, little attention has been paid to the foreign language curriculum itself and only slightly more attention paid to how it should be taught. A variety of current trends at both the elementary and secondary levels are resulting in a growing enthusiasm for "content-based" foreign language curriculum and instruction.

What Is Content-Based Foreign Language Instruction?

Content-based foreign language instruction uses learning objectives and activities drawn from the elementary school curriculum as a vehicle for teaching foreign language skills. The foreign language may be the sole vehicle for teaching the content, substituting for native language instruction; or, instruction through the foreign language may augment and supplement content instruction in the native language. Many existing programs fall into these definitions: in both total and partial immersion programs, some or all of the curriculum is taught exclusively through the foreign language. In many programs for language-minority children native language instruction is complemented by special English language instruction in particular content areas. In Canada, "extended French" programs have both a direct language instruction component and an indirect component, in which one or two subjects are taught exclusively in French; in the U.S., similar programs have begun as well.[1] Some FLES programs are also moving toward enriching content instruction through the foreign language curriculum.[2]

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Content-Based Instruction: An Historical Perspective

One important influence on the growth of content-based foreign language programs is the successful establishment of immersion programs in both Canada and the United States. For over twenty years Canadian students have had the opportunity to develop high levels of proficiency in French through participation in immersion programs—programs in which the school curriculum is taught through the medium of a foreign language. Immersion students learn at least half the school curriculum through the medium of a foreign language and thereby also learn language through content. Research results show that students in immersion programs acquire both content knowledge and high levels of foreign language proficiency (Genesee).

Proficiency has become the watchword of the eighties. In secondary and postsecondary schools, proficiency-oriented foreign language instruction places great value on using language for purposeful communication. Students in proficiency-oriented settings engage in activities that offer real or simulated opportunities for exchanging information about real-life events. The emphasis on meaningful and purposeful communication, by implication, leaves a greatly diminished role for rote, meaningless practice drills, wherein skills and knowledge are developed in isolation from their real-life uses.

The proficiency movement characteristic of secondary and postsecondary instruction today is itself derived from a European trend in the 1970s to mold foreign language instruction to the communicative needs of learners. Proponents of notional-functional syllabi elaborated on the need for language objectives to reflect what learners should be able to *do* with language, identifying language functions or tasks learners should be able to perform in the language (van Ek; Wilkins). Similarly, theoreticians pointed out that learners have diverse communicative needs and that the special purposes to which learners will put their language skills should mold the language curriculum. This "language for special purposes" (LSP) approach resulted in curricula that included both a core of language skills required for basic communication and a branching approach which reflected the special linguistic needs of diverse learners such as future engineers, bankers, or tourists (Robinson; Richterich and Chancerel).

The proponents of these related trends—notional-functional syllabus, language for special purposes, and proficiency-oriented instruction—share a common orientation. They recognize the need for foreign language curriculum to focus on usable language skills and for practice activities to reflect opportunities for purposeful language use.

In the United States, the success of immersion programs, coupled with these recent trends, has brought about significant interest in content-based second language programs. Language programs to meet the needs of linguistic minority students have incorporated many of their tenets. Content-based English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs are those in which one or more content areas of the regular school curriculum are taught and/or enriched through the medium of the second language (Cantoni-Harvey; Crandall; Mohan).

Today there is growing interest in moving FLES curricula toward a more content-based approach. Traditionally, the FLES curriculum has been thematically organized around vocabulary units, with a minimum amount of grammar included. Practice activities have been designed to spark student interest through games, songs, and dramatizations and with heavy visual support from media such as pictures and filmstrips. Increasingly today's FLES practitioners are looking to the elementary school curriculum as an additional source of learning objectives and activities.

A Rationale for a Content-Based Approach

Content-Based Instruction Is Natural Language Learning

Perhaps the most forceful argument for teaching language through content—and content through language—is the parallel of such an approach with language acquisition and concept attainment in natural settings. Young children acquire language simultaneously with knowledge of the world. Understanding of their immediate environment goes hand in hand with learning to communicate about it. Children's intrinsic motivation to make sense of the world and to communicate with significant others about it provides the impetus and vehicle for language acquisition. Similarly, the acquisition of additional languages in natural settings follows the same path. The need to understand, to participate in meaningful and purposeful life activities, provides both the motivation and channel for language learning for children and adults. The separation of language from learning, of language from thought, of language from meaning, of language from communication, can only undermine the effectiveness of language instruction.

It is not surprising, then, to observe schools shift from language instruction in isolation to content-based approaches. Certainly the success of immersion has made evident the effectiveness of learning language through content. Research has provided direct evidence that students in immersion learn the academic content specified in the school curriculum *and* develop significant levels of foreign language proficiency. In foreign language programs the emphasis on proficiency has underscored the importance of meaningful and purposeful language use. What can be more meaningful and purposeful than to use language in a school setting for those tasks that are inherent in the nature of schooling? Language learned through content has the further advantage of allowing an integration with higher order thinking tasks, so that students may communicate about thoughts, not just words. In FLES programs, students in content-based instruction develop skills in the language of learning, not just in the language of play. In all second/foreign language programs, content-based instruction develops a wider range of discourse skills than does traditional language instruction, since content-based foreign language instruction provides opportunities for using skills beyond mere description and identification. Students gain skills in expressing language functions such as explaining, classifying, comparing, and evaluating.

Content-Based Instruction Promotes Higher-Order Thinking Skills

Content-based instruction ensures that classroom activities are cognitively demanding (thus enriching students' cognitive development), unlike traditional instruction which can be cognitively undemanding.

Cummins has described language tasks as ranging on two intersecting continua (Figure 1).

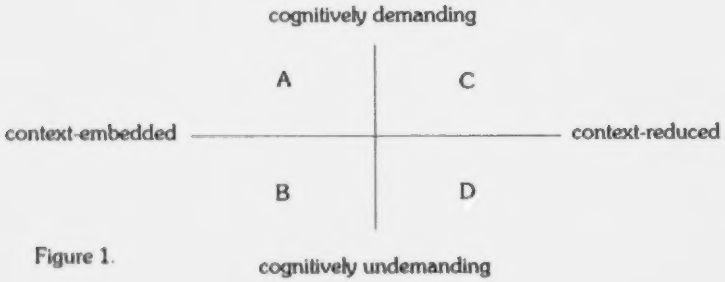

Figure 1.

On the one continuum, tasks are described as context embedded or context reduced. Context-embedded language tasks provide clues to meaning through the context of the task. Manipulatives, visual aids, and realia, for example, embed language in a context made understandable through concrete experience. Similarly, background knowledge may serve to embed context (knowing the topic of a conversation, for example, makes it easier to understand than when eavesdropping on a conversation between strangers on an unknown topic). In contrast, context-reduced language tasks include few cues to meaning. Listening to a radio broadcast in a foreign language on an unfamiliar topic or attending a lecture are context-reduced language tasks.

The other continuum on Cummins' grid provides for tasks that range from cognitively demanding to cognitively undemanding. Discussing the causes of the civil war is cognitively demanding; stating your name and address or naming a picture are cognitively undemanding.

Cummins' grid has implications for elementary school foreign language instruction. Too often, in an effort to make language context-embedded, activities are also cognitively undemanding. Because students have limited foreign language skills, practice activities tend to require only recall such as rote identification of vocabulary. Activities in which students name objects, or objects shown in pictures, place few cognitive demands on students. The challenge for elementary school foreign language teachers is to move language practice from the quadrant of context-embedded but cognitively undemanding tasks to the quadrant in which activities are context-embedded *and* cognitively demanding. By selecting content-based foreign language objectives and activities, teachers can promote higher cognitive functioning while providing quality language practice.

Concerns about Time and Achievement

Despite a high level of interest in providing young children with opportunities to acquire foreign language skills in the early grades, expansion of elementary school foreign language programs has been affected by competing concerns: (a) an already fully packed elementary-school curriculum and (b) achievement in "the basics," a determinant of what is taught and how it is taught.

Content-based foreign language instruction addresses concerns about "taking time out of the school day" by minimizing the amount of "time taken out." Content area concepts are enriched and enhanced through activities conducted in the foreign language. Further, as mentioned, through such activities, students use critical thinking skills, thereby addressing another current priority of elementary schools. (Examples are provided later in this paper).

How Is Content Integrated in Elementary School Foreign Language Programs?

Immersion programs provide the most complete integration of elementary school content and foreign language instruction because the elementary-school curriculum is the immersion curriculum. By learning content through the medium of the foreign language, students acquire foreign language proficiency as well. In FLES programs, content-based instruction may use content to introduce and practice (or simply practice) objectives delineated in the foreign language curriculum. A content-based FLES class studying foods may learn the concept "objects have many attributes" and practice the skills of classifying and categorizing, by sorting fruits according to various attributes (color, size, shape, texture, taste). Similarly, in FLEX programs, the objectives in the elementary school curriculum and those of the FLEX curriculum may be taught through one another.[3] In teaching about the culture of Mexico, a FLEX teacher may simultaneously enrich students' acquisition of the social studies concepts of goods and services by asking students to identify goods and services typically available in a Mexican city.

Developing a Content-Based Curriculum

Identifying Points of Coincidence

How can elementary school foreign language programs develop a content-based curriculum? To integrate FLES and FLEX objectives into a content-based approach, curriculum developers should consider several factors. First, foreign language curriculum developers should identify the desired communicative outcomes: What should students be able to do with language? Traditionally, FLES curricula have addressed survival language skills such as numbers, colors, the family, the home, time (days, months, seasons, clock time), parts of the body, clothing etc. In most FLES programs, these objectives continue to play a central role in the language curriculum. Both FLES and FLEX curricula specify cultural learning as integral to their goals. Once linguistic and cultural outcomes (i.e., objectives) for each level of instruction are identified, two approaches to integrating language and content are recommended.

In the first approach, foreign language objectives are compared with those of the content areas of the elementary school curriculum, determining where the points of coincidence lie. Foreign language objectives are then sequenced in accordance with subject area objectives at specific grade levels. For example, foreign language skills and cultural knowledge related to the family might be best taught in the primary grades when the social studies objectives relate to the child's family and to families around the world. The mutual historical influences of French, German, or Spanish on American life, language, and customs is a topic that ties neatly with a social studies unit on explorers of the New World, often taught in the fifth grade. Curriculum developers, therefore, would plan the language/culture units to integrate and interact with the social studies curriculum at the appropriate grade levels. In this approach, language/culture objectives are sequenced to integrate with other curricular areas.

Another strategy for integrating language with content is to identify language objectives for a given level, and then plan content-based activities through which linguistic skills may be acquired/practiced. If, for example, FLES students in the upper elementary grades are learning the color terms in their foreign language class, the teacher may give groups of students a cupful of randomly selected jelly beans (or M&M's). Students estimate the total number of candies in the cup; they can sort by color and then compare quantities (greater than, less than); students identify the ratio of a single color candy to that of the total number and express this ratio as a fraction. Comparing the results discovered by each of the groups, the class develops a probability for the occurrence of each color. The data can also be displayed as a bar graph, and language functions can be practiced as students label, describe, and compare the relative frequency of occurrence as depicted by the graph. In this instance, the linguistic objective (teaching colors) has not been planned to coincide with the time at which a particular content area objective is to be taught; rather, teachers select appropriate practice activities from the content curriculum at hand to serve the goal of language development and to reinforce content.

Defining Language Objectives

Clearly, content-based instruction requires careful planning. If the content area curriculum is to determine the course of language development (as in the case of immersion or FLES programs in which the foreign language substitutes for English-language instruction in the subject area), language learning objectives must be carefully considered and planned. It is inappropriate to assume that desired levels of proficiency and accuracy will emerge miraculously from content lessons taught in a second or foreign language. The specification of language learning objectives in a content-based program is derived from three sources: the content area curriculum, the foreign language curriculum, and ongoing evaluation of students' language skills. These language objectives may be described as content-obligatory or content-compatible (Snow, Met, and Genesee).

The identification of language objectives that derive from content curriculum is relatively straightforward. These objectives describe what language is required for students to develop, master, and communicate about a given content area. For example, a science lesson on the growth of plants will require students to have specific plant vocabulary (e.g., plant, seed, water, soil, sun). Such vocabulary is obligatory: students just can't learn the content without it. Content-obligatory language objectives are both semantic (i.e., specification of verbs, nouns, and adjectives) and functional (i.e., rhetorical devices required for reports, language functions such as requesting/giving information, narrating, persuading, etc.).

As in the color/candy example above, the language curriculum may use content as a vehicle for enriching and extending language skills. Language objectives which can be taught through content are content-compatible. Simply stated, content-compatible language objectives are those which *can* be taught within the context of a given content but are *not required* for successful content mastery. In science experiments, for example, students may be expected to describe cause and effect relationships. Cause and effect may be expressed simply using "because" or more elaborately through "if-then" clauses. Either of these cause and effect language functions may be selected as content--compatible language objectives, depending on the communicative needs of the learner and/or error analysis.

The language curriculum should reflect the general and specific communicative needs of the learner. All language learners must acquire basic communicative skills such as expressing wants and needs, requesting information, describing events in present, past, or future tense. To express these language functions learners require vocabulary and grammar skills. In reality, such general communicative needs have formed the heart of the traditional second/foreign language syllabus. Although the terms "communicative needs" and "language functions" are of more recent vintage, the basic content (if not approach to teaching) of second/foreign language curricula has remained relatively unchanged over the last three decades. In contrast, the notion of a "personalized" vocabulary has been a more recent trend, sparked by the language-for-special-purposes movement and by related advocates of communicative syllabus design. Both the general and personalized communicative needs of learners may serve as a source for identifying content-compatible objectives. In an immersion classroom, for example, a teacher may elect to focus on the language of prediction (e.g., What will happen next?) in a science lesson (hypothesizing) or a reading lesson (predicting events in a narrative) or social studies (current events). The language of predictions is *compatible* with the each of these content areas but not necessarily *obligatory* for any given lesson in that content.

Evaluation of students' language skills is another fertile source of content-compatible language objectives. Analysis of student errors in the foreign language classroom provides indicators of areas where continued student growth is needed. Research on the oral proficiency of immersion program graduates, for example, indicates that although they achieve impressive communicative skills, students do not approximate native speakers' abilities in speaking and writing. Unfortunately, these findings have been used as the basis for recommending that traditional forms of grammar instruction be emphasized in immersion language arts instruction. Analysis of student errors, on the other hand, may serve to determine appropriate content- compatible language objectives. Content-compatible objectives will ensure greater exposure to correct structures and more opportunity for meaningful production. If, for example, error analysis reveals that students demonstrate weaknesses in the use of the conditional tense, teachers may design content activities which call for its use. In a fifth grade unit on explorers of the New World, teachers may ask students to complete the sentence, "If Columbus had been from France..." Such a question has not only the advantage of providing meaningful and contextualized grammar practice;

it also requires students to use critical thinking skills in applying known facts (the impact of Spanish discovery of the New World) to a hypothetical situation.

Getting Specific: Developing Foreign Language Skills through the Content Areas

All the elementary school content areas provide opportunities for the integration of language and content. Some examples are given below.

Mathematics

Surprisingly, perhaps the most productive area for integrating language and content is mathematics. Hands-on mathematics activities are especially adaptable for integrating foreign language because manipulatives provide links between the concept—the mathematics content—and the associated language. Although traditionally language teachers have had students practice arithmetic operations when they taught numbers, other language practice opportunities drawn from mathematics abound.

As noted earlier, color vocabulary can be practiced through mathematics activities such as estimation, determining frequencies, ratios, fractions, and probability. Students in kindergarten or first grade can be asked to name their favorite color. As students line up in groups by their favorite color, they form a "real" graph. By substituting an icon (such as a colored token) for each child in the line, students make a representational graph. They can interpret and describe the information conveyed in their live and representational graphs and thereby not only practice color vocabulary but also reinforce objectives drawn from an age-appropriate curriculum.

In almost every foreign language classroom, students are expected to acquire vocabulary for objects in the classroom. More often than not, practice activities rarely progress beyond the rote/recall level. Teachers ask students to point to, touch, draw, or name objects and places in the room. By integrating mathematics objectives related to standard and non-standard units of measurement, classroom vocabulary can be extended beyond the recall level while students practice important mathematics skills. Children can estimate the size of classroom objects in non-standard units of measure (e.g., crayon lengths) or standard units of measure (inches, centimeters). Similarly, students can measure distances in the classroom, such as from the teacher's desk to the door, using standard measures (feet/meters) or non-standard measures (their own feet). By estimating and then comparing their actual measurement, students refine skills in both estimation and measurement, all the while practicing foreign language objectives. Classroom objects can also be weighed, again using both non-standard measures (pennies, marbles) or standard ones (ounces/grams). Repeated experiences with measurement allow students to improve the accuracy of their estimates, refine skills in measurement, and engage in meaningful, purposeful language practice.

Activities with attribute blocks develop the basis for logical thinking, understanding sets, and comparing and contrasting. Attribute blocks are manipulatives for mathematics that come in three colors (red, yellow, blue); two thicknesses (thick,thin); four shapes (circle, triangle, rectangle, square); and two sizes (large, small). The various attributes of these blocks (size, color, shape, etc.) involve descriptive language elementary-school language students should learn. Accordingly, attribute-block activities provide opportunities to enrich language skills through cognitively engaging language practice activities. Teachers may ask students to group a set of blocks according to a single attribute ("Put all the reds together."). Each group thus forms a disjoint set. By grouping according to two attributes (blue and large) students learn language *and* the concept that objects may have multiple attributes. When students are asked to group the blocks according to overlapping attributes ("Put all the blues in one set. Put all the triangles in another set.") students learn about the intersection of sets (the set of all the blue blocks that are also triangles). By physically engaging in manipulating the blocks students practice mathematics skills (classifying by attributes), acquire mathematical concepts (intersecting sets), and learn language through TPR-like activities.[4]

The concept of intersecting sets is one which language teachers and content teachers can profitably use to develop a wide range of knowledge, and one which sets the stage for higher-order thinking skills such as comparing and contrasting. The intersection of sets may be graphically represented by a Venn diagram (another mathematics objective!) as shown below in Figure 2.

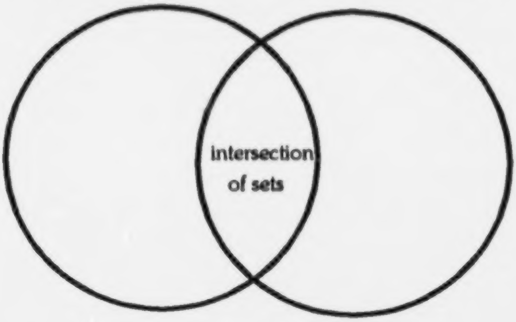

Figure 2.

In the Venn diagram the overlap between the two circles represents the intersection of the sets; the intersection includes all blocks with attributes common to both sets. In our example, all the blocks that are both blue and triangles are found in the intersection. The blue triangles may be large, small, thick or thin (Figure 3).

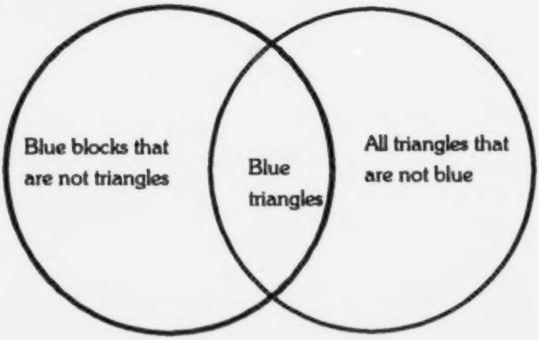
Blue blocks that are not triangles
Blue triangles
All triangles that are not blue

Figure 3.

In contrast, the portion of the set outside the intersection represents the shared attribute of all members of the set. In this case, all blue shapes that are not triangles, of any size or thickness; all triangles that are not blue, of any size or thickness.

Science

The concept of intersecting sets may be applied to a variety of content areas and to language skills to be taught and practiced. For example, science and language can be taught through one another as students identify characteristics unique to or shared by the seasons of autumn and spring. Such characteristics (as illustrated by pictures) may be climate (temperature, rainfall); activities (football, baseball); seasonal (emergence of plant growth, changing of leaf colors); holidays (Memorial Day, Mother's Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving); outdoor activities (play, picnics, amusement parks); and indoor activities (attending school, visiting museums, watching television, doing homework). As students sort the pictures of autumn and spring, placing them in two large intersecting circles (a Venn diagram), they soon find a number of pictures which could represent either season. Students have thus identified another example of the intersection of two sets.

The concept of intersecting sets may be extended in a unit on animals. Objectives related to animals are in both the science curriculum and the foreign language curriculum. Foreign language activities can go beyond simply naming animals. Students can learn to describe where animals live, what they look like, how they move, what they eat, etc. Such knowledge coincides well with objectives in the science curriculum. As students acquire both scientific and linguistic knowledge, they can organize their knowledge and represent it schematically through Venn diagrams and other graphic organizers.

Students can generate a list of characteristics of the elephant and another list to describe the lion. These characteristics are organized into a Venn diagram. Animal attributes such as "four legs, lives in the zoo, has a tail" fall into the intersection. In the areas not overlapping, unique attributes are listed (for example, the lion: eats other animals, has a mane, is king of the jungle etc.) The Venn diagram serves to organize students' thoughts and forms the basis of a class composition which compares and contrasts the two animals. The opening paragraph might highlight the similarities and draw its content from the intersection of the sets:

> The lion and the elephant are both animals. They both have four legs. They both have tails. They both live in the zoo.

Succeeding paragraphs describe the unique characteristics of each animal:

> The lion is very fierce. It eats other animals. The lion's color is gold. It has a mane. The lion is the king of the jungle.

Another graphic organizer is the web (Figure 4).

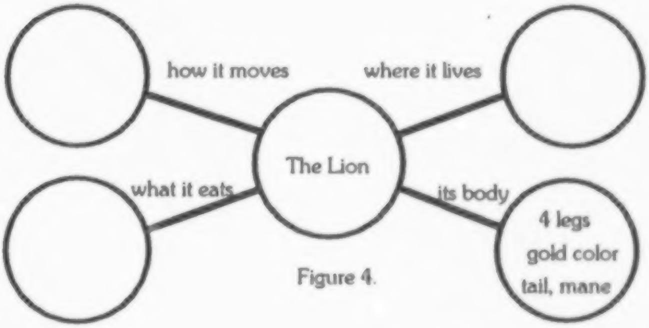

Figure 4.

In the web, the central topic is the lion. Each spoke is labelled to represent one characteristic of the lion. The pods contain information related to that topic. The spoke labelled "body" leads to a pod that contains information such as "four legs, gold color, mane, tail."

The information and its organization lead to a well organized composition about the lion. One important concept for children to learn in expository writing is that a paragraph usually has a topic sentence and the remainder of the paragraph provides supporting details. Students learn that the spokes of the web represent key information for the topic sentence; the pods contain supporting details:

> The lion has a body. It has four legs. It has a mane. It has a tail. The lion's fur is the color of gold.

Reading/Language Arts

The examples above show that foreign language learning can be integrated not only with mathematics and science, but also with reading/language arts. Clearly, students can learn to read class-generated material, organize their thoughts for writing, and begin to express their learning in print.

Because students' foreign language knowledge may be very limited, early reading tasks should be tied to experience. That is, students may learn to read material containing language that stems from learning experiences. Students need not be able to produce orally and spontaneously the language they are asked to read; however, the language *must* be receptively controlled. That is, students can be exposed to written language that they understand when they hear it. One effective vehicle for such reading material is the language-experience story.[5]

Foreign language teachers can develop on chart paper class stories that emanate from a learning experience. The experience may be a science activity:

> There are many things that are the same in the autumn and spring. We can play outside. We can go on picnics, etc.

or a mathematics activity

> We counted 24 jelly beans in our cup. Six jelly beans were red. Four jelly beans were white. Our cup had more jelly beans than the teacher's cup.

Or, the experience may be from a social studies lesson:

> A map shows boundaries. We made a map of our class. We used red crayon to show the boundaries. We saw a map of the world. We saw the boundaries of many countries.

The experience may be a language experience itself, such as a favorite story told and re-told in class, and then re-narrated by the class.

> There is a house in the woods. Three bears live in the house. They have three bowls of soup. They have three chairs. They have three beds.

Because the students have experienced the concepts, and because the experience has provided the basis for internalizing (and perhaps expressing) the associated language, the students can read these language-experience stories.

Pre-reading and pre-writing strategies used in English language instruction are equally useful in foreign language classes. Students can reinforce skills such as using background knowledge and experience to decode meaning when they confront text in either language. In the foreign language class, new readers can use their previous knowledge and experience to select which of a group of headlines, drawn from an authentic target language newspaper, is about sports. Similarly their knowledge of advertising techniques and slogans can assist in comprehending a target language advertisement for a familiar hamburger franchise. Pre-writing strategies such as brainstorming and webbing (as described above) are tools to enhance the effectiveness of students' writing in both English and the target language.

Reading/language arts objectives in the regular elementary school curriculum can also be integrated with the linguistic and cultural objectives of the foreign language curriculum through folktales, fingerplays, rhymes, poetry, and children's literature drawn from the target culture. Familiar tales, such as "The Three Little Pigs" can be the springboard for further language development and content-based activities in social studies. Students may explain why some houses are made of wood. Based on the teacher's oral descriptions, they may match pictures of different types of houses with the most appropriate climate. Students may be asked to design and then orally describe a house suited to given climatic conditions, or more simply, to draw a house in accordance with the teacher's directions.

In their first language, students need to learn to read four major types of discourse: narrative, expository, persuasive, and procedural. As has been shown, students can gain familiarity with narrative discourse in the foreign language through experiences with folktales and familiar stories. Expository discourse skills can be developed through language experience stories. Through reading and writing their own advertisements for familiar products, foreign language students can gain skills in comprehending (and producing) persuasive discourse. And, by following directions for a science experiment or a recipe, students can learn to read procedural discourse in their foreign language as well.

Students' foreign language writing need not be limited to prose. In a content-based language classroom, students can gain writing skills by creating simple patterned poems, such as diamantes and cinquains. An English lesson on letter writing can be integrated with the foreign language as students learn culturally appropriate salutations and closings and forms of addressing envelopes. Language arts activities to expand students' vocabulary and word knowledge can include identification of loan words and linguistic influences between the target language and English. Clearly, a content-based approach to foreign language instruction can draw from and reinforce essential skills in the English reading/language arts curriculum.

Social Studies

Another content area which lends itself extremely well to content-based instruction is social studies. For several decades, the elementary-school social studies curriculum has been organized around the "expanding horizons" concept. Students begin by studying about themselves ("All about me"), their families and other families ("My family," "My school family," "Families around the world"), their community and region, and that of others. Study of local, state, and U.S. government and history is usually followed by study of world cultures as represented by selected countries around the world.

Clearly, many of the concepts in the social studies curriculum provide opportunities for meaningful foreign language practice. As students learn about themselves, they acquire linguistic skills in providing personal identification and biographical information ("My name is..."; "I am ... years old"; etc.) The study of students' own families integrates well with foreign language skills on the same topic. The school family unit can include a foreign language unit on the names of school workers, where they work, and what they do. As their horizons expand, students can compare their home, their community and region to others in target culture countries.

Several social studies and foreign language objectives can be spiraled through every grade level. Skills in understanding, interpreting, and creating maps are developed at increasing levels of sophistication throughout the elementary grades. Simultaneous development of foreign language skills associated with the terminology for interpreting and making maps can occur in the language classroom. The topic of modes of transportation, drawn from the language curriculum, can be linked to the social studies concept "how people get food and clothing" (grade one); with transportation available in the local community (grade two); how people travel to distant regions (grade three); transportation in our state, yesterday and today (grade four); transportation in our country, yesterday and today (grade five); transportation in other world regions (grade six).[6] Modes of transportation, and their destinations, integrate well with map/geography skills, as students plot the course of travel from point of origin to point of arrival. Like most recursive curricula (including proficiency oriented foreign language curricula) each re-visit to the topic provides for elaboration and expansion of student knowledge and language skills at ever-increasing levels of complexity and sophistication.

Cultural objectives in FLES and FLEX programs can easily be taught in conjunction with almost every social studies objective. Geography (including map skills), history, and the social sciences objectives may be taught in the foreign language. Students learn to identify on a world map places where the target language is spoken. They label and color-code maps of their classroom, school, community, country, or of regions where the target language is spoken.

As noted above, upper elementary students can explore the influences that the target culture has had and continues to have on American life, language, and customs in conjunction with a unit on the exploration of the New World. A foreign language unit on food opens the door to identifying target-culture foods found in our daily cuisine, or to investigating the role of a popular ingredient, such as the tomato, across cultures. In a social studies unit on shelters, students can compare typical forms of shelter in their own community with those that predominate in one or more target culture countries (e.g., houses vs. apartments; number, type, and layout of rooms; etc.). A primary-grades economics unit allows students to compare monetary units and their equivalents in the U.S. and in a target culture country; they can evaluate the comparable cost of goods (such as a soft drink) or services (a postage stamp) while mastering social studies objectives, linguistic skills, and cultural knowledge.

Whether through the social studies or the foreign language curriculum, children should come to understand that people around the world have similar needs (food, clothing, shelter, social/governmental organization), but that these needs may be expressed and met in varied ways. Because an early emphasis on differences may result in negative attitudes and stereotypes, the elementary school foreign language curriculum should emphasize the conceptual generalizations that are at the heart of the social studies curriculum, stressing similarities rather than differences. Thus, through instruction in foreign language and culture, students will learn that all people are part of families; that families are part of a community; that communities are organized to meet the needs of people.

Students learn that communities provide special places for learning (e.g., schools) and fun (parks, theaters, playing fields etc.) This concept coincides well with foreign language objectives related to leisure activities. Similarly, as students learn about work in the community (why people work, kinds of jobs in the community, etc.), they also engage in meaningful foreign language practice activities for describing/identifying community workers and their tasks. A cultural outcome of this social studies unit may be that students understand that the occupations available in communities reflect choices communities make about the goods and services they desire. The sociocultural role of the *concierge/portero* becomes more understandable and meaningful when foreign language instruction is content-based.

Art, Music, Physical Education

Content-based foreign language instruction may extend to other disciplines as well. Art, music, and physical education are well suited for several reasons. First, these areas rely less on print for the transmission of knowledge than do other curricular areas. And, since many students in FLES and FLEX have very limited reading and writing skills in their foreign language, non-print-based activities are an optimal channel for teaching language through content and content through language. Further, the cultural objectives of the foreign language curriculum fit well with the objectives of these content areas. Lastly, many educators and parents already bemoan the short shrift given to the arts in most elementary schools; content-based foreign language instruction can help rectify that shortcoming.

Directed art activities incorporate many aspects of TPR foreign language instruction. Through following a series of teacher's directions to complete an art project, students gain extensive listening comprehension skills in the language. These activities can be drawn from the art curriculum at any grade level and should be selected to coincide with foreign language objectives. For example, an activity in paper cutting can incorporate language skills such as "left, right, straight" etc. Because the art curriculum teaches students about color, line, texture, and form, it lends itself well to linguistic skill development in each of these areas. Art activities can also be integrated with other areas of the curriculum. For example, students in an art class can use pictures of food to develop collages to illustrate the health concept "You are what you eat." Describing these collages, foreign language students engage in meaningful language practice related to foods. Collages that illustrate a variety of textures provide opportunities for students to develop expressive descriptive language.

Content-based art activities may also integrate foreign culture. Students may engage in crafts, such as making "ojos de dios" or Mexican masks. French students can learn about the art form which prevailed prior to the invention of the camera, invented by the Frenchman Etienne de Silhouette. Paper cutting and egg decorating are craft activities which also tie language, art, and culture from other countries.

Classical works of art may be used in content-based programs to integrate art, language, and culture. Using techniques derived from the visual literacy approach (Feldman), foreign language teachers can integrate a variety of objectives and skills. Using the painting by Velazquez, *Las Meninas*, a Spanish teacher can begin by asking students to describe everything they see. The teacher may ask: who are the people you see? (men, women, children, dogs, parents) What they are wearing? Where do you think they are? (e.g., indoors or outdoors? a school? a park?) Is it day or night? How can you tell? After these questions, the foreign language teacher may ask for sensory descriptions related to color, shape, line, texture, use of light, or imagined sounds. The teacher can ask students to imagine what the people are saying to each other; to infer the relationships among those portrayed (Do you think the princess is happy? Why? Why not?). Upper elementary students can draw conclusions about the lifestyle of those portrayed, even if only in response to yes/no questions from the teacher

(Are these children getting ready to play outdoors? Do you think the princesses will be jumping rope? How close do you think these children sit or play to one another? Show me with your hands how far their dresses stick out. Now, keep your hands there and see how close you can get to your classmates. What do you think you can or can't do if you are dressed like this?) Students may also explore additional interpretations of the work by forming tableaux which show what they think each of the persons was doing ten minutes before the painting captured them; alternatively, students may form tableaux to illustrate the subjects' activities ten minutes after the painting is completed. Similar activities can be conducted with a variety of paintings drawn from the target culture which carry both artistic and cultural information. Here content-based foreign language activities once again weave together content and culture while providing a basis for meaningful and purposeful language practice.

Parallel content-based foreign language activities may be drawn from objectives in music and physical education. In a content-based foreign language class, students may tie language with content by practicing the contrasts of loud and soft, fast and slow. They can learn about the use of voice by speaking in the foreign language using their "whispering voice," their "calling voice," their "talking voice," or their "singing voice."

Rhythm instruments drawn from the target culture help students learn the concept of beat and reinforce vocabulary related to numbers. Students learn about the varying lengths of quarter, half, and whole notes. Concepts of beat and rhythm and related vocabulary, along with the names of instruments, can be taught in the foreign language.

Culture can be integrated by learning folk songs and classical music contributions from target-culture countries. Playing rhythm instruments can help students experience the rhythmic characteristics of music from specific areas where the target language is spoken. The rhythms of music from Haiti or from Provence can be contrasted; similarly music from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Peru can be compared and contrasted both in terms of rhythm and instrumentation. Through such experiences students can gain an appreciation for both cultural diversity and the uniqueness of the culture of diverse parts of the world which nonetheless share a common language. All the while, students also master objectives in both music and foreign language.

Just as art and music provide opportunities for content-based foreign language instruction, so, too, does physical education. Through TPR activities, students gain foreign language comprehension skills and master physical skills such as skipping and running and large and small motor coordination. As foreign language students learn playground games and sports played by children in target-culture countries, teachers again tie the elementary-school foreign language and culture curricula together.

Implications of Content-Based Foreign Language Instruction

To a limited extent, elementary school foreign language teachers have worked to integrate their curriculum with that of other content areas for some time. However, the approach advocated here is more far-reaching. Foreign language teachers are encouraged to find a content-area vehicle for teaching and practicing almost every objective in their curriculum. Furthermore, content-based foreign language instruction is more distinct from traditional elementary school foreign language programs in that a content-based foreign language curriculum may sequence some language objectives according to the curriculum of other content areas.

For content-based foreign language instruction to be effectively implemented, elementary school foreign language teachers must be well versed in the elementary school curriculum. They must know what is taught, when, and how. Since these teachers frequently are also curriculum writers, materials developers, and curriculum implementers, it is important that teachers know what is taught in each curriculum area so that foreign language objectives can be sequenced accordingly. Elementary school foreign language teachers need to be familiar with activities that are frequently used to convey concepts in the content areas. Foreign language teachers will need to select from that repertoire of activities those which lend themselves well to implementation in a foreign language. For example, hands-on activities in which students are engaged with manipulatives and realia can be implemented more easily in content-based foreign language classes than can those activities which rely heavily on verbal abstractions and discussion for concept attainment.

Not only do elementary school foreign language teachers need a repertoire of content-based activities from which to select appropriate learning experiences, they must be familiar with appropriate materials and related instructional resources. As language teachers they must know how to modify their own linguistic output to match students' limited comprehension of the foreign language; likewise, they need to know how to ask cognitively demanding questions which may be answered by students with limited foreign language productive abilities.

Teachers, therefore, must be prepared to teach or reinforce the elementary school curriculum through a foreign language. They must be able to identify key concepts and the key linguistic skills needed to verbalize them; they must be familiar with available materials and skilled in adapting them or developing their own; they must have a well developed repertoire of instructional strategies which allow concepts to be attained through concrete experiences; they must be trained to use linguistic strategies such as simplifying or elaborating their output, and to use other "negotiation-of-meaning strategies" to enable learners to acquire and/or extend both language skills.[7]

The elementary school foreign language teacher must also be skilled in working collaboratively with other school personnel. Since most content-based foreign language programs supplement instruction in English, the foreign language teacher is not solely responsible for ensuring that students meet the curricular objectives in the selected content (e.g., mathematics or physical education). Rather, the foreign language class provides opportunities to enrich, extend, or reinforce concepts learned first in English. As a result, elementary school foreign language teachers must work collaboratively and extensively with other teachers to ensure that content-based foreign language instruction is supportive of, rather than repetitive of, English language instruction. Schools must give English language and foreign language teachers opportunities to meet and plan collaboratively to ensure the most effective use of instructional time.

Conclusion

Content-based language objectives are a new way of designing language curriculum. They allow teachers in diverse language settings—from elementary to post-secondary, from ESL to foreign language—to plan systematically for language growth while ensuring that students develop skills in using language for meaningful purposes and for cognitive growth. This paper has focused on its application to the FLES setting.

Schools need to develop a philosophy that recognizes the value of content-based foreign language instruction. The foreign language professional must understand the invaluable role that content-based activities can play in developing both foreign language proficiency and cultural knowledge. Further, the role of the foreign language program within the greater context of the elementary school curriculum is enhanced when foreign language contributes to achieving the goals set for all students. In turn, elementary school teachers and administrators need to see how much foreign language can contribute to achieving the goals for which they themselves are held accountable. They need to include foreign language teachers in planning for instruction and in allowing opportunities for students to gain additional practice in skills and concepts through foreign language experiences. Through shared curricula, shared planning, shared implementation, shared materials and shared students, the education of all children can be enhanced.

Notes

[1] For instance, some FLES programs teach foreign language through the school district's art, music, or physical education curricula (Cincinnati Public Schools) or through social studies (Milwaukee Public Schools).

[2] FLES (foreign language in the elementary school) is a model of foreign language instruction which may begin anywhere between kindergarten and sixth grade, has a

sequenced language curriculum with clearly stated linguistic objectives (primarily aural/oral), and develops cultural knowledge as well.

[3] FLEX (foreign language experience/exploratory) is a model of foreign language instruction which is usually short-term and non-continuous, providing exposure to another language or several languages. Learning objectives include limited language skills, with more emphasis given to cultural knowledge.

[4] TPR (total physical response) is a method of foreign language instruction developed by James Asher in which students acquire language by physically responding to a series of increasingly complex commands given in the foreign language.

[5] Language experience is an approach to reading described by Roach Van Allen in which students' descriptions of experiences are the basis of reading materials. Students generate oral text which is recorded by the teacher (or another adult). The recorded text becomes the basis of reading and related activities. Allen's basic tenet, that students can read whatever they can say, may need to be modified in foreign language classes, so that students may read whatever language they clearly understand. For additional information, see Allen and Hall.

[6] Grade designations are approximate since school systems may vary as to when these social studies concepts are taught.

[7] Negotiation of meaning is an interactive process in which communicative participants work to ensure that they understand one another and are being understood. For a fuller discussion, see Lorenz and Met; Genesee; and Wells.

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Creating Effective Foreign Language Learning Environments in Elementary Classrooms

Eileen B. Lorenz and Sarah Rice

Children are prompted to communicate by an innate drive to understand and share meaning. As Gordon Wells notes,

> Conversation is rarely an end in itself, particularly where young children are concerned. They talk in order to achieve other ends: to share their interest in the world around them, to obtain the things they want, to get others to help them, to participate in the activities of the grown-up world, to learn how to do things or why things are as they are, or just to remain in contact (Wells, p. 53).

Since the extent of communication and the very nature of meaning depend on the setting in which one is placed, it follows that if we expect children to learn another language in school, we must foster children's frequent and meaningful interactions in environments that engage them in thoughtful communicative activities.

For elementary-school language programs, classroom environments will differ according to the program model used and teachers' beliefs about how language is learned. Regardless of the model employed, the effectiveness of the classroom as a setting for thinking and communicating in the foreign language is mediated by the psychological atmosphere, the physical resources available, and the meaningfulness to the students of the instructional activities. Therefore, we will explore these three aspects of the environment.

Program Models for Foreign Language Learning

FLES, FLEX, and immersion are the three models employed in elementary school foreign language instruction.

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Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES). In the FLES model, students learn listening, speaking, and limited reading and writing skills. They also develop cultural awareness. Instruction occurs before, during, or after school in 20- to 45-minute classes meeting daily or several times a week throughout the school year. The FLES teacher may travel to regular elementary classrooms to provide instruction or may teach in a separate classroom devoted to foreign language learning.

Foreign Language Experience (FLEX). In FLEX, students develop listening skills, positive attitudes, and interest in learning a foreign language through exposure to one or more languages and cultures during classes that range in duration from three weeks to a year. Classes meet daily or several times a week within the school day. A FLEX teacher may travel to regular elementary classrooms to provide instruction, or teach in a separate classroom devoted to foreign language learning.

Immersion. In immersion programs, students learn all or part of the regular elementary curriculum through the medium of the foreign language. While learning the prescribed elementary curriculum, students become functionally fluent in the foreign language. Instruction is provided in the regular elementary classroom for all or part of the school day.

For each model teachers create environments to promote communication and "meaning making" by constructing or modifying the classroom setting.

The Psychological Atmosphere

The challenge to think and communicate in a new language makes the psychological atmosphere an especially critical element in foreign language learning. Teachers set a positive tone by the manner in which they relate to and interact with students and by establishing the activities and strategies through which students achieve success. An inviting, accepting ambience enables students to seek the meaning of the language, to link the meaning with their background information, and to express their understanding in comfortable ways.

Planning to set a positive tone begins before the students' day, when teachers prepare the materials and schedule. An itinerant FLES teacher establishes a routine to which students can easily relate by following the same general sequence of activities for each class. Teachers demonstrate how to begin and end the class or day and how to make transitions between activities. Beginning class each day with an engaging song, chant, or rhyme that encourages students to interpret the words through movement or to sing along facilitates transition to foreign language instruction.

Younger students quickly learn that it is time to focus on foreign language activities when teachers use a bell or some other auditory or visual signal.

Preparation in upper elementary grades and middle school may be aided by students fulfilling assigned responsibilities. These responsibilities might include posting the foreign language teacher's schedule and objectives or setting up or adapting activities in a foreign language center. Teacher responsiveness to student characteristics such as age, personality, learning style, and level of accomplishment contributes to students' comfort level.

Teachers in all three program types must be especially conscious of the interests of students in the age group for which they are planning instruction. Although naming numbers and counting may be taught effectively by using familiar objects, the attractiveness of the objects is age-dependent. While children in a grade 1 FLES or immersion class might be highly motivated to use plastic teddy bear counters, grade 6 FLES students may be more motivated by plastic monster counters. Children in all grades and program models may be highly motivated by edible counters such as small crackers, carrot coins, or grapes.

Students feel comfortable when instruction builds on what they already know. Teaching grade 1 FLES students to name animals and their offspring, focusing on categories of animals, such as dogs, birds, snakes, and fish, builds on the existing knowledge of most six year olds. Grade 1 immersion students might expand this focus to the distinguishing characteristics of category members, or they might learn to name and talk about specific examples, such as collie, parakeet, boa constrictor, and goldfish. Grade 6 FLES students might learn the classes of animals, such as mammals, reptiles, and insects. Students' interest in specific animals may be tapped to expand their knowledge. Once students are familiar with these classes, an activity can be planned around animal pictures selected by students using a "web" to organize the information. Webs are organizational tools, drawn like the spokes of a wheel, in which the hub represents the object studied (in this instance, the animal) and the spokes explore various characteristics of the object. Pairs of students may use sets of pictures of familiar animals in reinforcement or review activities chosen to match student language level and background knowledge. Student partners may name or describe the colors of the animals pictured and classify them according to habitats (forest, desert, jungle, ocean), diet (carnivore, herbivore, omnivore), or mode of locomotion (swim, fly, walk, crawl).

Students begin to understand concepts in the foreign language by listening to and observing the teacher's meaningful use of language illustrated by realia, objects, and gestures. They strengthen and expand their knowledge and clarify meaning through their own manipulation of materials. In a grade 5 FLES class, for instance, after students listen to and observe the teacher locating North, South, East, and West on several maps, pairs of students may locate these directions on smaller maps. Instructional media and conversations among peers provide additional language models and sources through which thinking and language may be clarified and expanded. Exploring materials and talking with peers about ideas reinforce language development as understanding of the concepts emerges.

The comfort level of students influences the degree to which they risk thinking and communicating in the foreign language. Because communicating in a new language involves risk, the teacher must create a nurturing psychological atmosphere that reinforces the chidren's language use, rather than correcting errors that do not interfere with communication. Since most students are highly motivated by teacher's praise, such praise should be given generously in response to students' use of the language.

When teachers establish realistic expectations and accommodate individual responses to foreign language and concept learning, children actively seek knowledge and the means to express ideas. Second grade students may be more willing to act out a scene from a familiar story than a lesser known one, and they may be more comfortable acting as a group rather than performing individually.

Careful identification of simple language components and basic science principles may guide grade 6 FLES students in building a terrarium. While it would be unrealistic to require FLES students to compile written reports in the target language explaining the water cycle, FLES students may construct the terrarium, learning the language to describe the components. Using patterned language, FLES students may write simple sentences to describe procedures followed in their project. On the other hand, water-cycle reports would be appropriate to both the concept and language level for grade 6 immersion students. While some immersion students might prefer to write a report, others might be motivated by having a choice among ways to present their synthesis of the new information. Immersion students might be offered a range of choices, including a written report, an original play, writing and illustrating an original story, or writing a journal entry from the point of view of a drop of water.

The psychological atmosphere of the classroom is enhanced when teachers make a conscious effort to create a climate conducive to foreign language learning. This climate is created by setting a positive tone, using signals to remind students of classroom procedures, rewarding use of the foreign language, and building instruction on students' background knowledge.

The Physical Environment

The physical aspects of the foreign language classroom are organized to engage students in reflection, interaction, cooperation, and conversation. Purposeful arrangements of furniture, equipment, and materials provide the framework in which students grow as thinkers and communicators.

Space

Classroom space is structured for large and small group instruction and for small-group and individual activities. Flexibility in changing the arrangement of seating and work areas to accommodate different interaction strategies and group sizes is desirable. Teachers in all program models use available space or rearrange the furniture to promote student interaction and to seat students close to the learning source.

Being in close proximity to materials and models helps students attend to the instruction and increases the teacher's ability to monitor students' understanding. Because the teacher is the primary language model, students must be able to hear the teacher with as little interference as possible from auditory and visual distractors. Foreign language teachers rely heavily on nonverbal cues to help students match what they are hearing with what they are seeing.

When FLES, FLEX, and immersion teachers read aloud, they seat students nearby on a rug so they may hear the story and see the illustrations and teacher gestures that reinforce meaning. FLES students hearing "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" for the first time need to see the illustrations to be able to match new language with the pictures. In a similar fashion, during an immersion grade 3 science lesson demonstrating interactions of liquids and powders, the teacher seats students so that they can observe the results of the experiment.

Space may be defined by materials and activities as well as by furniture and other physical features in the classroom. Students' ages and the nature of the materials and activities must be considered in determining the boundaries for workspaces. In well defined areas, students know the boundaries within which they may work. Knowing that certain activities are confined to designated spaces helps students respect the right of others to learn.

A 12 in. x 18 in. mat made from colored paper may be used to define and limit the individual workspaces of students as they work with small-scale hands-on materials. For example, such a mat may assist grade 1 FLES students in organizing their materials as they work with Cuisinaire rods to explore and develop number concepts and the language to describe size and color. (Cuisinaire rods are sets of wooden rods, with 10 different colors and sizes. The numbers 1 to 10 may be represented by designating the 1 centimeter white rod "1" and the 10 centimeter orange rod "10.") While Cuisenaire rods are most frequently used in teaching mathematics, FLES teachers may use them to teach color and comparative structures as well.

Workspace is defined in a similar way for FLEX students to compare and contrast money from different countries. Pairs of students may be asked to identify the similarities and differences between selected currency (or replicas) from two countries. Comparisons might include size, color, denomination, and markings. Students may group the monies according to similarities and differences and then regroup them into other categories. A work mat provides students with a defined area in which to manipulate the currency.

A work center in a grade 1 immersion class organized around a store theme in which students buy and sell fruits and vegetables encompasses a larger space allowing the participation and interaction of two or three children at a time. It also affords easy access to the learning materials (e.g., cash register, paper for recording shopping lists, plastic fruits and vegetables, and containers). A setting designed to help grade 5 immersion students simulate experiences of immigrants arriving at Ellis Island involves the entire classroom. It includes stations for baggage inspection, passport verification, and currency exchange.

Larger work spaces increase the potential for exploring different aspects of an experience. They may house a greater variety of learning materials and contain more possibilities for student-to-student interaction. Large spaces designed with meaningful and interesting activities increase motivation for foreign language learning.

When the classroom environment is inadequate or not suited for a learning activity, foreign language teachers often move the activity to another space. Cultural activities in FLES, FLEX, and immersion classes, such as teaching traditional folk dances or children's games, are better taught and learned in the larger space of the gymnasium or all-purpose room than in the classroom.

In a content-based FLES class, students' collection of living things and nonliving objects will be more meaningful to students when conducted outdoors in the school yard. Teachers discuss the purpose of the activity and new expectations with students before moving to a new location.

Equipment

Equipment useful in teaching a foreign language includes magnetic card readers, overhead projectors, listening stations, film and filmstrip projectors, and video and audiotape recorders and players. Equipment may be integrated into activity centers or located in other areas accessible to groups and individuals. To promote responsible behavior, the children are taught how, why, when, and where to use equipment.

FLES students may use an audiotape recorder and multiple copies of a book in a center to listen to a taped reading of a familiar story. In response to social situations depicted by a film strip, FLEX students may practice foreign language phrases modeled by a magnetic card reader for greeting and leave taking.

Materials

Teachers select materials that support the concepts identified from program goals and objectives and the background knowledge of the students. Especially important are hands-on materials for student use in learning language and concepts. Animal replicas help illustrate language with concrete objects. For example, they help students learn animal names and language to describe physical characteristics and modes of locomotion. They also may be used to help children learn about adult animals and their offspring and animal habitats.

Work areas in the environment include various information sources. Pictures, manipulatives, films, filmstrips, videotapes, audiotapes, and records help students connect the new language with familiar concepts. Lists, webs, graphs, and charts generated during class lessons are displayed or integrated into centers for continued use. Other print materials such as dictionaries, books, maps, newspapers, magazines, and menus serve as language models, sources of additional information, and models demonstrating how information may be organized.

Charts written in the foreign language serve three purposes. They show students how to organize themselves and their work, inform students about procedures for learning and learning how to learn, and demonstrate the use of written language.

A chart with class rules helps students organize and manage their work by stating classroom expectations, objectives, schedules, rules, and responsibilities. Posted rules remind students of classroom expectations. A chart noting assigned rotating responsibilities helps students develop a sense of ownership and assists teachers in organizing materials and centers within the time allotted for instruction.

Webs, lists, and maps also help students organize information and monitor their understanding and use of knowledge. These teacher-made or student-generated materials serve as references for further work. For example, in an immersion class on the first day of a lesson about mammals, students might learn the names of several mammals. As students name others, the teacher records them on a list. The following day, using their list, students web the characteristics of the mammals.

In constructing a graph, grade 1 FLES students may use a list of foods they like. Grade 3 immersion students may keep a list of daily temperatures in Ghana for a learning activity in social studies. The information collected may be used to make a bar or line graph. FLEX students may organize language used in greeting and leave taking as well as other social behavior on a web after viewing a filmstrip.

The classroom environment may also be enhanced by inviting visitors with special knowledge about the foreign language or some aspect of the culture to the class. Purposeful use of video programs, films, and filmstrips are also extend classroom boundaries. Sometimes the limited availability of current audiovisual materials requires creative approaches by foreign language teachers.

Video material containing appropriate content information may be available in English. Guided by program goals, teachers should decide if the film may be shown to the students with teacher narration in the foreign language. For example, if a nontraditional film or filmstrip version of "Little Red Riding Hood" is available, a FLES teacher may decide to show it to students with the volume off. In the narration, the teacher will use familiar language that is at an appropriate level for the students. A high-interest film will provide students with new visual representations to give meaning to familiar language and thus provide important reinforcement.

In sum, the use and organization of space, equipment, and materials contribute to the effectiveness of the physical environment as a setting for language learning. Teachers structure space to facilitate attention and student interaction. The use of instructional media multiplies the number of language models available, further supporting hands-on materials that promote learning language and concepts. Charts help students use additional language models, organize their thinking, and monitor their behavior.

Instructional Organization

How the classroom environment is prepared has an impact on students' psychological and physical readiness to learn and on the amount and nature of learning that occurs. Just as teachers motivate and inform students through an environment reflecting the language and concepts to be learned, so do teachers pace students through the learning day by the activities they plan and organize. Teachers provide varied stimuli that motivate and allow students to learn by listening, watching, imitating, and reflecting. Grade 3 FLES students learning to name and describe fruits and vegetables, for example, should participate in ongoing opportunities to touch, smell, and taste the fruits and vegetables during their learning experiences.

Teachers identify and clearly communicate the concepts to be taught and learned, and illustrate these with language, gestures, and nonverbal representations that will enable students to understand. As the teacher is the primary language model, the presentation and practice of new language and concepts occurs first in large and small groups directed by the teacher. Later, students may initiate their own responses to the language and concepts being learned (student-centered activities).

The lesson below shows how one teacher incorporated teacher-directed and student-centered activities into a plan. It is based on the model of a grade 4 itinerant FLES teacher who has 20-minute instructional periods and who plans teacher-directed and student-centered activities that range from 5 minutes to 20 minutes. One day a week is designated as center day; students are assigned to centers on a rotating basis.

Teacher-Directed or Student-Centered	*Time*	*Activity*
Teacher-directed	5 min.	Routine opening activities: date, weather, culture
Both	5 min.	Whole class and pairs of students describe photos of classmates
Teacher-directed	7 min.	Teacher models selection of post card portraits (purchased from museum) and illustration of the portrait for a "portait gallery" of famous people; to be a center activity on center day
Student-centered	3 min.	Student-led guessing game or movement activity

While the main portion of this lesson is teacher-centered, pairing students provides student-centered opportunities to practice familiar language in non-threatening exchanges with peers. This lesson sets the stage for a center activity to draw portraits of famous people from the target culture. Having available a variety of activities to which a newly learned skill may be applied in different contexts allows students to experience continued growth by broadening the skill application. When grade 1 FLES students have successfully completed naming numbers and forming sets of objects from one to five in a group activity, they might go to a listening center where audio directions and self-correcting activity cards direct them to make sets of objects and then to compare the sets with an answer key. Similarly, if a FLES program begins in grade 6, once the students have learned to name numerals and count from one to ten, they may go to a listening station where audio directions, reinforced by visual examples, direct them to make cards to create a game similar to *Go Fish*. Through this activity, students follow simple oral directions and construct materials to use for another activity in which they practice language with other students.

Similar activities may be used effectively in FLEX and immersion classes. Since FLEX and immersion program goals differ, the content focus and the breadth and depth of the activities will vary greatly.

Trying out new language and ideas in small groups and pairs enables students to practice expressing their thoughts and to monitor the effectiveness of their communication in comfortable situations. Knowing that the teacher is close by, moving from group to group, motivates students to remain on task and to seek help when needed.

Grouping Students for Interaction

Teachers identify interaction strategies that assist students in learning and expressing their understanding. Students learn concepts and acquire language proficiency through peer-to-peer, cross-age, large/small group interactions, and individual encounters with materials. Interactions provide opportunities for teachers and students to know that they understand and are making themselves understood.

Cooperative learning is a strategy in which small heterogeneous groups of students work and learn together. Because the group structure requires students to talk in the foreign language as they solve problems or complete learning tasks, cooperative learning is a valuable strategy for foreign language learning in the elementary school.

Spencer Kagan has noted, "The ethnographic research reveals that teachers do about 80% of the talking in most classrooms" (Chapter 2, 2:5). Since language learners need to increase vastly the proportion of class time they spend using the language actively, cooperative-learning techniques are appropriate, facilitating student-to-student conversation. Pair work is a natural way to introduce cooperative learning into the foreign language classroom. Once the students are comfortable working in pairs, the teacher can form groups of three to five.

Careful consideration should be given to identifying the language and procedures students need to work together. Initially the teacher may limit requests to performing simple tasks. Later, more complicated tasks may be assigned to cooperative groups. After the teacher introduces a concept, cooperative tasks are assigned for the class to practice using the language and concepts that relate to the learning goal. Clearly stated learning goals and well defined tasks facilitate carrying out group projects.

In assigning students to cooperative learning groups, teachers also identify and assign roles defining individual contributions to the functioning of the group. Comparable to organizational-effectiveness exercises, the possible roles in these cooperative-learning groups include recorder, language-use monitor, participation monitor, and task master. Clear definition of the roles plays an important part in helping students take responsibility for their learning. This guidance aids students in monitoring their use of the foreign language, the extent of on-task behavior, and the effectiveness of social skills.

A suitable project for cooperative groups of FLEX students is listing major holidays for the foreign culture. The recorder might write or draw symbols representing holidays; the language-use monitor might request teacher assistance with language as needed; the participation monitor might verify that all students contribute and have equal opportunities to participate in the group discussion; and the task master might keep the group's attention focused on the goal through reminders of the time limits or use of a checklist that includes the months of the year (in the language). FLES students might present a puppet show based on a story read aloud by the teacher. Immersion students might construct a model of a supermarket, and explain how different sections are organized by food groups.

In cooperative learning, students are accountable for learning as group members and individuals. Interdependence among the students in the group is established and maintained by linking student efforts to the teacher's evaluation of a project or final product.

Learning Centers

Centers offer additional opportunities for differentiated interactive learning. Depending on the program model, students might work in centers one or more days a week. While some students work in centers to review or reinforce language and concepts, teachers may work with other small groups. Materials and equipment in the centers may include listening stations with audiotapes and student copies of songs, poems, rhymes, and stories; videotapes; computer programs; board games; and materials for creative art, drawing, and writing projects.

A writing center prepared for a unit on shelters in a grade 1 classroom might also be used to reinforce concepts of size. Using illustrations of various types of shelters in the center, FLES, FLEX, or immersion teachers might ask students to make a book about large and small shelters. Students' ages and level of foreign language proficiency influence the nature of the tasks delineated in the writing center. Students may choose among these tasks:

- Illustrate large and small shelters
- Illustrate and label large and small shelters
- Describe large and small shelters using a patterned sentence

Traveling teachers adapt to and build on the environments of each classroom they visit. Itinerant FLES teachers bring centers in prepared kits, or they cooperate with the regular teacher to integrate the foreign language into other curricular activities by creating new centers or adding materials to existing centers. For example, commercially produced or student-produced foreign language books may be integrated into a classroom reading corner and tapes may be added to a classroom listening center. An existing math center focusing on relative weights of objects in a grade 3 class might be used by an itinerant content-based FLES teacher. FLES students may practice stating comparisons of relative weights of objects. Once taught, the language "heavier than" and "lighter than" may be practiced by pairs or small groups of students using familiar objects and weights already in the math center. A teacher-made audio cassette may provide language models for both questions and responses to be understood and eventually used by students. In answering the question, "Which is heavier, the blue ball or the red car?" beginning students may respond by pointing to one and saying, "Heavier." More advanced students might respond, "The blue ball is heavier," or "The blue ball is heavier than the red car."

Creating and transporting an effective foreign language learning environment poses a unique challenge to itinerant teachers. Use of centers in kits and materials available in classrooms visited increase options for student learning. For the FLES teacher who travels from room to room, the preparation of kits is crucial to successful centers. These kits contain items related to a particular idea or objectives to be met during both teacher-directed and student-centered instructional activities. Items in the kits are used to introduce and reinforce concepts through direct instruction and to provide cooperative-learning or student-centered review and practice activities.

The basic elements of a kit are:

- Teacher demonstration activities (noted on index cards)
- Student activities (noted on index cards)
- Realia and manipulatives—objects for teacher demonstration activities and objects for student group and pair work: these objects may be placed in a center created by the FLES teacher or integrated in an already existing classroom center
- Print material such as books or lists of book titles that relate to the theme of the kit
- Songs, rhymes, and poems that relate to the theme of the kit
- Game boards, tokens, dice, game cards, and directions

Kits may be organized either by grade level or by themes. The advantage of organizing a kit by theme is that teachers have ready access to several different objects to illustrate the same language or concept. This provides students with multiple opportunities for understanding.

A kit organized around the theme of size might include these items:

- Large and small items students know how to name
- Plastic sacks with large and small items to be classified and compared by pairs of students
- At least one well illustrated story that emphasizes size differences, such as "Jack and the Beanstalk," and an audiotape of the story

- An audiotape and well illustrated student copies of poems, rhymes, and songs that contrast large and small items
- Listening-center equipment (if none is available in each classroom)
- Construction paper, scissors, crayons, paste, clay, yarn, and other art materials
- A picture file illustrating items in varying sizes

Instructional organization requires coordination of a number of elements. Both teacher-directed and student-centered learning activities are planned. Centers and kits prepared with a variety of materials to illustrate selected objectives or themes are used to extend content and apply skills. Varied student grouping patterns encourage risk taking and accommodate more frequent student-to-student oral communication.

Summary

Attending to the psychological, physical, and instructional aspects in the classroom helps teachers create environments that promote successful learning and expression in the foreign language. We have offered suggestions and rationales to help teacher trainers and novice foreign language teachers create effective learning environments in elementary-school classrooms. The need for purposefully creating and organizing environments to facilitate foreign language learning remains the same whether teachers have their own classrooms or whether they teach in rooms structured by other teachers.

A psychological atmosphere conducive to learning is created by communicating clear expectations and by making students comfortable with the language and with themselves as foreign language users. Teachers show responsiveness to students' needs and successes by accepting students' language use and by planning lessons to build on students' existing knowledge.

The physical elements of classroom environments may be organized to define and equip workspaces in ways that support thinking and language learning. Having objects for students to move and group connects concrete experience with abstract language. Instructional media serve as language models and prompts. Equipment provides different avenues for learning receptive and expressive language.

Instructional organization requires the management of learners and learning activities. Varied grouping patterns and learning centers, created in classrooms or imported from prepared kits, facilitate this management. Some activities may be guided by the teacher while others allow students to organize and use thoughts in ways they see as meaningful.

Teachers create the conditions, expectations, and models in the classroom environment to facilitate students' foreign language learning. When the environment is conducive to thinking and speaking, students develop rich concepts and grow in their communicative skills.

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School-District Perspectives on Elementary-School Language Programs

R. Stephen Tegarden and Christine L. Brown

The teaching of foreign languages in the United States can be a politically and emotionally charged issue. Language teachers have regularly advocated the inclusion of foreign languages in the "basic" school curriculum. However, historical, political, and economic events in this century have influenced the broader public to either fear foreigners and their languages or to dismiss the need for Americans to be competent speakers of other languages.

During World War I, German-Americans were prohibited from speaking German, publishing newspapers in German, or supporting bilingual schools. World War II brought antagonism against Asian-Americans and concerns about learning Asian languages. Certainly the Cold War with the Soviet Union served to create fear and suspicion of those Americans who would want to study Russian.

In addition, most Americans are the sons and daughters of immigrants. In order to be successful in the United States, immigrants had to relinquish their native language in favor of English. In many cases, active discrimination and ridicule caused immigrant parents to insist that English be the only language used in the school and even at home.

Today, economic changes and technological advances have made our world smaller and more accessible. No longer can Americans remain untouched by world events or fluctuations in the global economy. Present day kindergartners will need the tools to deal with cultural and linguistic diversity. To be

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successful, productive citizens, they will have to compete in a global marketplace and communicate with an increasingly diverse population at home.

Although most Americans are aware of the changed world their children will inherit, many are still reluctant to accept the study of foreign language and culture as an integral part of the K–12 curriculum. Parents, school administrators, and foreign language teachers will experience this reluctance as they attempt to convince decision makers of the need for K–12 language programs. Some school administrators themselves will be "dead set" against the concept as will some elementary classroom teachers and parents.

Some of the reluctance toward the early study of foreign languages can be reduced by careful planning and by honestly addressing the concerns of skeptics. Other fears, those related to historical, political, and personal events probably cannot be eliminated. Those who advocate K–12 programs must identify and cultivate the supporters, sway the undecided, and not spend too much time trying to convince those who are actively opposed.

In certain school districts, language study has fared better than in others. If one examines environments where language study has flourished, specific practices and policies can be identified which have led to the successful implementation and nurturing of language programs. The authors of this paper, a school superintendent and a language supervisor, have reflected on their experiences in districts that have generally been supportive of language study. In this paper we attempt to highlight what we believe to be the essential elements of successful programs. Success, from our perspective, is defined as follows: the provision of long, well articulated sequences of study in not only Western European but also less commonly taught languages to all students in a manner that is comprehensible, educationally stimulating, and downright enjoyable.

We shall address these questions: (1) Why would a school system want to implement a K–12 language program? (2) Who is responsible for program implementation? (3) How does the project director begin? (4) What questions will be asked of the project director?

Why Implement a K–12 Program?

Generally, subjects are added to the curriculum because of attention from national commissions, state and national testing results, or world events. As a result, the public is sold on the value of children's acquiring certain information. In the last ten years, much attention has been focused on Americans' linguistic incompetence. Nearly all the esteemed national reports on education, beginning with the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, in 1979, have called for increased attention to the teaching of foreign languages. These reports have echoed the philosophy that our economic and political survival depends on our children. These reports clearly state that children must grow up in a world that is ever changing and they must be able to compete educationally with children in other countries. Americans are woefully behind others in our knowledge of geography, languages, and cultural awareness.

One of the most recent reports on education, *America in Transition—The International Frontier*, from the National Governors Association, sets foreign language proficiency as a primary objective. The governors of our nation state:

> All students should have the opportunity to learn to speak a second language in their early years. Studies demonstrate not only that students most easily learn to speak another language in their early years, but also that foreign language learning enhances cognitive development and basic skills performance for elementary school children.

As parents encounter the internationalization of the economy, they wish they had learned far more about the world than they presently know. Many parents are asking school administrators to expand language programs. Parents who studied a language for only two years in high school and never had the opportunity to study or travel abroad want their children to have a better chance at learning to speak one or more foreign languages. If the manner in which they studied languages was not successful, these parents hope that early language introduction will increase their children's proficiency in a second language.

National need as well as parental pressure have helped focus attention on the importance of language study. School administrators must recognize important educational factors that will have an impact on the implementation of long sequences of language study. In addition, they need to comprehend and espouse the benefits gained from these in-depth sequences.

First, language learning takes time. Evidence from the Foreign Service Institute shows that if one studies language in a classroom in the typical Carnegie Unit fashion (50 minutes a day for 180 days a year) only the rudiments of a language will be learned. Two hundred intensive hours of French or Spanish, languages that are relatively easy for Americans to learn, will result in a very low-level speaking proficiency. Many more hours are needed to develop a low-level proficiency in reading, writing, or listening.

Work with Peace Corps volunteers and foreign service personnel has shown that proficiency increases with the number of intensive contact hours. To develop a proficiency in all four skills that would be comparable to an educated native speaker of French, German, or Spanish would take several thousand hours. Proficiency in more difficult languages takes much longer.

Based on this information, parents and school administrators should now understand why students who have studied a language for two years in high school will simply not be able to do more than ask directions, or order in a restaurant.

If schools are to develop some superior speakers of a language, study must begin early. Foreign language study, like mathematics, science, and social studies, should be introduced in kindergarten and continue throughout the K–12 curriculum. Just as not all students capture the fundamentals of math in the same time frame or through the same instructional approach, not all students will capture the essential elements of languages in the same fashion. Currently, most language study is relegated to the high school level, and the instructional approach is the same for all learners. If language learning begins in kindergarten, students will have much exposure to the building blocks of language and will gain confidence and knowledge as they progress.

Although developing proficiency in a language is one fundamental reason to begin language study at an early age, a second important reason is to help students understand how non-native speakers of English view the world. Empathy for others must be cultivated at an early age, or children grow into adults who have little tolerance for diversity. Learning another language, experiencing another culture, and coming in contact with non-native speakers of English helps children develop positive feelings for others. In some schools, the elementary language teacher provides the first or only exposure to foreigners. In this regard, much of the instruction in foreign language classes helps fulfill many important social studies goals.

A third reason to begin language in kindergarten is that language learning can have a "spill-over" effect on the acquisition of other concepts. Just as there are interrelationships between math and science, there are relationships between language learning and language arts, critical thinking skills and listening skills. The State of Louisiana conducted research into the effect of elementary school language study on the acquisition of reading and math skills. Researchers found that students who had studied French achieved higher scores in the reading and math subtests of the Louisiana Test of Basic Skills (Rafferty). One conjecture for the improved reading scores in English is that the development of strong listening skills has a very positive impact on the acquisition of reading skills.

Elementary foreign language teachers have long felt that they teach all four language arts skills. Listening skills are especially emphasized as students build comprehension in the target language. Few other classes require such concentrated active listening. Reading and writing skills are developed in the same manner as in the English language arts program. Reading and writing skills are taught along a continuum. Well trained elementary foreign language teachers incorporate content information from the areas of math, science, and social studies into listening, reading, writing, and speaking activities. Certainly public speaking competence is developed in the language classroom. The need to participate in class discussion in the target language helps students learn to express themselves in front of others.

An elementary language program has many benefits. By learning about other countries, students actually strengthen their understanding of the United States. They learn to appreciate the differences in peoples, and they come to recognize the similarities. As instruction proceeds, key skills and goals of the total elementary school curriculum are strengthened. Finally, of course, students gain a capacity for communicating directly with others who speak the foreign language.

Administrators and parents do need to keep in mind that not every student who begins a language in elementary school will become a superior speaker of the language. Being a superior speaker of a Romance language takes as much time and effort as being a superior mathematician, economist, scientist, or author. Superior speakers are born into bilingual environments, immersed in a language at a young age, or study another language in primary school through college, and they travel and study abroad. Just as only a small percentage of elementary school students become superior mathematicians or scientists, a small percentage of Americans will be able to carry forth in a second language as well as an educated native speaker of that language.

Administrators and teachers need to examine policies which exclude some youngsters from language study. Individuals with various learning disabilities can learn languages. They just learn them in a different fashion. Just as we have built alternative curriculum and programs for mathematics, science, English, and social science, we need to develop foreign language courses for special students and special purposes.

Changes can and are being made all over the country. Parents, language educators, school administrators, and researchers are beginning to work together to redefine a new American view of foreign language education. Much work is left to be done. Language teachers who have traditionally relied on the language profession for answers to their pedagogical questions need to broaden their professional relationships. They must begin to play a far more active role in the field of elementary education, curriculum development, supervision, and administration. They need to embrace and understand the culture of an elementary school with all its curricula and time constraints.

At the same time, education policy makers need to embrace the language profession. No longer should any national education conference present a program that does not include workshops and sessions on language learning. Enough educational reports have been issued that address our incompetence in languages. However, national education associations have been slow to take up the cause. If we are going to implement programs in the elementary schools, we need the help of the supporters, a commitment from the undecided, and silence from the nay-sayers.

In the end, learning anything new takes a commitment and a long time. This adage most certainly applies to the study of foreign languages. If Americans are to be able to conduct complex discussions on business or politics, educators must stop seeking a quick solution and stop blaming language teachers for their inability to create miracles. Administrators and parents must accept the fact that language study must be an integral part of the elementary curriculum and must put forth the time and effort to train teachers to work with all youngsters beginning in kindergarten.

Who Is Responsible for Program Implementation?

Once interest in expanding language programs exists in a community or in the minds of even a few influential parents, a superintendent usually has a tiger by the tail. He or she must endeavor to obtain as much accurate information as possible. Certainly if the district has a language program coordinator, this responsibility appropriately falls to this person.

If there is no district-wide coordinator, the superintendent can look to the high school language department, interested parents, or consultants. Although a high school department head or language teacher may seem to be a logical choice to lead an investigation into program expansion, sometimes this is not true. Superintendents need to understand that few high school language department chairpersons have enough experience with young learners to be able to take on this task. Most secondary school language teachers and department heads have been prepared to teach only older adolescents. In many cases their own language training at the university level was steeped in the literature of the target languages with little emphasis on using the language as a tool for communication. An elementary or middle school program needs to emphasize the development of the ability to speak, understand, write, and read the language.

Although high school language teachers may be reluctant or not have the time to lead an effort for program expansion, they will be supportive if they are kept informed of plans, receive information on the benefits of early language programs, and are encouraged to visit other districts with successful early language programs.

High school language teachers will eventually receive the students who have begun language in the elementary school, and they will have to modify their goals and objectives in order to ensure the continued development of skills youngsters acquired in the early grades. They are a very important component in any effort to expand programs, and their active support is essential. In small districts where there is no language department head or system-wide supervisor, superintendents must seek outside consultants or parents who have the time to conduct the research necessary for program expansion. Consultants at the state department of education and state foreign language organizations can provide the names of qualified individuals who might be available as consultants.

The coordinator of the effort to expand programs should ideally have teaching experience in elementary schools or at least a thorough knowledge of elementary curriculum. This individual should have leadership skills and the ability to listen and respond to different audiences. He or she should also have an up-to-date knowledge of foreign language teaching methodology.

How Does the Project Leader Begin?

Local and state foreign language conferences are good places to begin. Regional and national conferences also offer opportunities for individuals to meet and share the most up-to-date information on early language learning. In the last several years, three new national organizations have been formed to address issues related to early language teaching. They are Advocates for Language Learning, the National Network for Early Language Learning, and the Second Language Acquisition for Children Conference. The recently formed National Association District Supervisors of Foreign Languages is providing a network for K–12 language supervisors. In addition, the American Association of Teachers of French has an active Elementary Commission, and the American Association of Teachers of German has a "Kinder lernen Deutsch" (Children Learning German) project.

Some colleges and universities offer help to superintendents or language supervisors interested in expanding programs to the K–8 level. Although very few currently provide training for the elementary and middle grade language teachers, this situation appears to be changing. Bank Street College in New York and Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, are sources of information. Also, several books dealing with early language learning have recently been published. They provide research as well as suggestions for early language programs.

Tasks for the Project Leader

Once up-to-date research and information about early language learning has been acquired, the project leader has the large and continuing task of being a local fact finder for program expansion. Several methods exist to ensure that the desires of a community are understood. First the project leader must listen to the parents, teachers, and students. Often he or she can gain valuable insights into parental concerns by attending board of education meetings and reading letters to the editor in the local newspaper. Interest in early language programs may have also been expressed at PTO or PTA meetings.

The project leader must also begin to develop a thorough knowledge of the elementary and middle school programs. By attending faculty meetings, studying school handbooks, and reading course-of-study booklets and curriculum guides, he or she can determine the depth and breadth of the K–8 curriculum. In the middle grades, school schedules may present greater obstacles than anticipated. In the elementary school, the scope of required curriculum may be so broad that teachers and principals already feel overwhelmed by a perceived curriculum overload. These are important issues which must be addressed before programs can be expanded.

After three to six months of attending meetings and listening, the project leader may determine that the obstacles are so great and the lack of administrative and financial support so significant that the time is simply not right to move ahead. However, care must be taken not to jump to this conclusion too quickly.

Project leaders need to remember that many elementary classroom teachers, as well as school administrators, have either had unpleasant experiences or no experience with learning foreign languages. Many have not travelled abroad or come in contact with foreign students. In some instances, districts may have lacked funds or language teachers during the 1970s and therefore abandoned language programs.

Project leaders must not only listen carefully but must also begin to provide up-to-date research articles as well as examples of districts with successful programs. There is little point in comparing apples and oranges when it comes to districts. If a small district with a medium per-pupil expenditure is compared to a large district with a very high per-pupil expenditure, individuals may dismiss the success of programs as not being applicable to their situation. One must always look for a similar district with a similar financial ability to implement and support an early language program.

If school-wide committees exist to study curriculum aspects of the K–8 program, the project leader must investigate the work of those committees and if possible serve on them or at least address them.

Some districts might choose to have project leaders work with a task force in the research and recommendation process. Members should represent parents, the school board, elementary classroom teachers, school administrators, the foreign language department, and the business community. These representatives should be perceived by the school community to be broad-minded, fair, and receptive to change.

The task force members can aid in the collection and review of research. They should visit other districts with early language programs and hear testimony from language experts. Also, they should encourage comments from teachers, parents, and school administrators.

The choice of using a project leader alone or combining the use of a project leader with a task force is up to the school board or administration. Time, financial resources, or political reasons usually dictate the approach. Regardless of the process, the steps of investigation and discussion should be the same.

Following this investigation (which may take up to a year), a needs assessment or a curriculum survey can be devised and distributed to the various groups responsible for accepting or rejecting the ideas of program expansion. Although this step is necessary, care must be taken with this approach. If surveys are distributed too early in the process, the recipients may not have enough information to make informed comments. One sure way to kill the concept of program expansion is to survey a negative or uninformed population.

Survey information is valuable for several reasons. First, school administrators and board members respond to community pressure. If, as a result of a survey, parents indicate a strong desire for change, change will be made. Second, if high school students and high school alumni are surveyed, their insights into the value of early language study are invaluable.

In Glastonbury, Connecticut, more than 1,200 graduates of the high school were surveyed as part of the review of the foreign language curriculum. When asked to rank the program components they felt were the most beneficial to them, an overwhelming majority listed the opportunity to begin language study in the elementary school as the most beneficial aspect of the language program in Glastonbury. When asked if language study should begin before grade 3, the majority responded that language study should begin in kindergarten. High school graduates, especially those who were college students, also recommended adding an Asian language to the curriculum.

High school graduates know the language programs from the inside. They are also aware of the pressure of college entrance and exit requirements. In addition, they have valuable insights into the quality of the language program they experienced because they compare their proficiency to other college classmates. They are very aware of the skills necessary to land competitive jobs in business and industry, and in many cases, they are not hindered by the international myopia of the generation of Americans who felt that they succeeded without the knowledge of another language.

Parental responses to survey questions are also very valuable. A school board must know the extent of parental support before board members spend taxpayers' money to expand programs. Most parents will respond favorably if they understand how the program benefits their children and if they think the program will be cost effective. A sample parent survey appears in Appendix C.

Once all the appropriate groups have been surveyed and the results have been compiled, the project director and the task force must synthesize the comments and concerns and make recommendations regarding expansion or implementation.

Generally, final reports to the board of education or to superintendents should include the following information:

- rationale for expansion
- survey results
- summary of research into the positive effects of early language learning
- list and description of schools contacted and visited
- justification for grade level at which to begin
- plan for curriculum development for program
- resources for locating qualified teachers
- plan for modifying existing program as elementary students enter upper grade levels (absolutely essential)
- plan for program coordination (who is responsible for articulation of curriculum from level to level)
- plan for teacher supervision and evaluation
- plan for ongoing program evaluation (who, what, and how)
- estimated budget (at least first three years)
- time table for implementation.

Certainly not every question or concern can be anticipated in this report, nor during the first years of implementation. State foreign language consultants and elementary foreign language teachers in other districts are usually willing to provide ongoing support to principals and teachers in new programs. Perhaps a type of mentor relationship can be established between districts.

What Questions Will Be Asked?

Several common concerns usually arise from educators and parents. In order for programs to be expanded into the elementary grades, these concerns must be addressed.

Q. Since the elementary curriculum is already so crowded, how can the children handle one more subject area?

A. (1) The answer lies in skill and content overlap. The learning of a foreign language and exposure to another culture accomplish important language arts and social science objectives. Some curriculum concepts can be provided and/or reinforced by the language teachers.

(2) Youngsters enjoy learning languages in the elementary school, and they respond positively to learning something they enjoy.

Q. If we add a language, where will the teacher teach the children?

A. Language teachers can teach in the regular classroom. It is desirable to have a foreign language room, but not essential to begin a program. Language teachers will need a storage and work area to call their own.

Q. Where will we get the time in the elementary school day to add a language?

A. The time will have to come from the existing program, or the school day will be lengthened. If the day cannot be lengthened, a small amount of time can be taken from language arts, social science, mathematics, and reading. Since elementary language programs should emphasize skills from these curriculum areas, students will not lose ground. In fact, the Louisiana Study shows that students can actually gain skills in so-called core subjects.

Q. If the colleges are not preparing FLES and Middle School teachers, how will we find teachers?

A. Contact the language consultants at the state department of education, the statewide language teachers organization or other districts that have early language programs. If the program will not be implemented for a year or two, contact an area college or university and speak with the chairperson of the language or education department. They can often give the names of students who have mentioned an interest in teaching elementary school.

Q. The costs of program expansion seem high. We have to add and pay for other state-mandated programs. How can we fund another program?

A. A program does not have to be fully implemented at once. A district can add one year at a time thus spreading out the costs over a four or five year period. The costs are also not extravagant. Students generally do not take home books or workbooks. In many programs teachers prefer to use a teachers' guide and create many of their own activities. The major cost is the teachers' salary and audiovisual materials needed to begin a program. There usually are no consumable books purchased for a program.

Q. Do students who begin languages in the elementary school perform better on national or statewide foreign language assessments than students who begin languages in the high school?

A. Unfortunately, there are very few nationally standardized foreign language assessments. Those that do exist are usually limited to testing reading, grammar, and vocabulary in Western European languages. The Educational Testing Service is investigating the possibility of changing and broadening these tests to include other domains which reflect the importance of proficiency goals.

The only statewide proficiency assessment was conducted two years ago in Connecticut. This CAEP in foreign languages showed that students who began the study of foreign languages before grade 5 performed higher in listening and reading in the target language. The speaking domain was not fully assessed, and therefore we do not know what correlations would have existed in this domain.

Oral proficiency testing conducted by the U.S. government has clearly demonstrated that more hours of exposure to the target language result in higher speaking proficiency.

Q. Our students are not doing well on state and local tests of verbal and quantitative achievement. If we add a language, too, won't student scores be affected?

A. There is no simple answer to this concern. Classroom teachers know that they are held accountable for student achievement and test scores. When students leave their classrooms to be instructed by another teacher, classroom teachers sometimes feel that the time lost will be detrimental to time on task in the regular classroom. Administrators must demonstrate to teachers that the research into immersion programs in Canada and in the U.S. shows that as a result of foreign language instruction no loss occurs in native English languages arts skills. In fact the opposite may be true. Because students actually expand listening skills and acquire new cognitive strategies, their language arts skills in general improve.

Another important factor to consider in responding to this question is that children in other countries are studying foreign languages at an early age. International tests of achievement show that students in other countries do as well in most cases as American students (in some countries they do better). From the data Americans may be able to conclude that adding language study to the elementary curriculum will not negatively affect achievement test scores.

Q. Who will be responsible for overseeing elementary language programs?

A. Clearly, the mandate for establishing language programs comes from the superintendent. However, the school principal needs to assume part of the responsibility for early language programs. He or she will need to be involved in the research into program expansion as well as feel confident that students will be gaining important skills and insights as a result of early language learning.

Most principals will be able to assess the language teachers' performance in the classroom, but many building administrators will need help in assessing the teachers' proficiency in the language and appropriateness of materials and language teaching methodologies. Initially principals may call on experts from outside the district, but eventually districts will need to appoint an individual who will coordinate the language program from level to level and who can work collaboratively with principals to evaluate the teachers and the program.

In conclusion, establishing, nurturing, and maintaining early language programs takes time and commitment from many individuals. Once programs are implemented, language teachers and administrators must continually cultivate parental and community support. The accomplishments of students must be publicized, for success breeds success.

Younger students are very motivated to study languages when they see older siblings enjoying the benefits of early language programs. One of the great benefits of early language programs is that junior and senior high students are psychologically, educationally, and linguistically more prepared to travel abroad at an earlier age. Much like their teen-age counterparts in Europe, the graduate of early language programs can benefit greatly from travel with teachers and family as well as from spending a summer living with a family abroad. This early immersion in language and culture helps dramatically improve understanding of and tolerance for speakers of other languages and motivates teenagers to continue language studies into later life.

Language teachers and administrators know the rewards of having strong foreign language programs. Although time and energy must be expended for any program of quality, students are the beneficiaries of many exciting and fulfilling experiences. They are also well prepared to face the challenges of tomorrow.

Twelve Glastonbury High School students who recently returned from a month of living with Ukrainian families and attending high school in the city of Lvov shared a Ukrainian proverb with a community group. Ukrainians say that when two countries are at war, in order to promote peace they must exchange their children. Because of their proficiency in Russian, our students' were exchanged with twelve students from the Ukraine. In Lvov, these students were called "The Children of Peace."

Our belief is that early language programs, the implementation of programs in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and/or Russian and the nurturing of existing programs will in fact result in a more secure and peaceful world—a world in which children and adolescents can actively communicate with one another.

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Appendix A

Useful Addresses for Additional Information

Advocates for Language Learning, P. O. Box 4964, Culver City, CA 90230 (213) 398-4103

American Association of Teachers of French, 57 E. Armory Ave., Champaign, IL 61820 (217) 333-2842

American Association of Teachers of German, 112 Haddontowne Court, No. 104, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 (609) 795-5553 (fax: 795-9398)

American Association of Teachers of Italian, 4 Oakmount Road, Welland, Ontario L3C 4X8, Canada, (416) 732-2149

American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages, M.L. 340, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, (602) 621-3702

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, Mississippi State University, PO Box 6349, Mississippi State, MS 39762-6349

American Classical League, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056, (513) 529-6559

American Council of Teachers of Russian, 815 New Gulph Road, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 (215) 525-6559

American Council of Teachers of Uncommonly Taught Asian Languages, Dept. of Linguistics, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 6 Executive Boulevard, Upper Level, Yonkers, NY 10701 (914) 963-8830

Association of Teachers of Japanese, Department of East Asian Languages and Literature, Van Hise Hall, 220 Linden Drive, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706 (608) 262-1740

Canadian Parents for French, 309 Cooper Street, Suite 210, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0G5, Canada

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), 1118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037 (202) 429-9292

Chinese Language Teachers Association, 161 South Orange Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079 (201) 761-9447

Concordia Language Villages, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN 56560 (218) 299-4544

The Modern Language Association of America, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003 (212) 614-6320

National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages, Bobby LaBouve, Director of Languages, Division of Curriculum Development, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701

National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Language, Mimi Met, President, Montgomery County Public Schools, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL), Nancy Rhodes, Chair, 1118 22nd Street NW, Washington, DC 20037 (202) 429-9292

Conference on Second Language Acquisition by Children (SLAC), Rosemarie Benya, East Central University, Ada, OK 74820

Appendix B
Graduates' Questionnaire

1. Are you a native speaker of a language other than English?

2. Which language did you study first?

French Latin Russian Spanish

3. In which grade did you begin your first foreign language?

Grade: 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4. In which grade did you stop studying your first foreign language?

Grade: 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

5. In your first foreign language, did you pursue a regular or high-achievement language course?

Check one: Regular ___ High Achievement ___

6. Did you study a second foreign language?

Yes ___ No ___

7. Which language did you study as a second foreign language?

French Latin Russian Spanish

8. In which grade did you begin your second foreign language?

9. In which grade did you stop studying your second foreign language?

10. In your second foreign language, did you pursue regular or high-achievement courses?

11. How would you characterize yourself as a language student while you were in the Glastonbury schools?

12. Why did you study a foreign language? Check one.

I wanted to learn another language.

My parents encouraged me to take a language.

For college entrance requirements.

I knew it would help in my future career.

Other.

13. Did you receive credit from the University of Connecticut for the 6th-year cooperative program in foreign language?

14. If so, was it French or Spanish?

15. Did you take the SAT Achievement Test in French?

16. Did you take the SAT Achievement Test in Spanish?

17. Did you take the Advanced Placement Test in French?

18. Did you take the Advanced Placement Test in Spanish?

19. Did you travel abroad with teachers from GHS?

20. If so, rate your experience from 1 (low) to 5 (high).

1 2 3 4 5

21. Were you involved in foreign language clubs at Gideon Welles?

22. Were you involved in foreign language clubs at GHS?

23. If you stopped language study before grade 12, please indicate the reasons (check more than one, if appropriate).

My schedule could not accommodate more courses.

I was not interested in taking more courses.

I met the college entrance requirement.

I wasn't doing well enough to continue.

Other.

Present Information

24. Are you attending college or working? Check one.

25. If you are attending college, which language are you taking?

Chinese French German Italian Japanese
Latin Russian Spanish Other Not Applicable

26. If you are studying a language, is this language a continuation of the language you began in Glastonbury?

27. Were you given a language placement test in college?

28.If so, please indicate which test.

SAT Achievement Advanced Placement MLA
Departmental Exam Other N/A

29. Do you feel you were appropriately placed in your language class?

30. Are there entrance requirements at your college or university?

31. If so, what are they? (check one)

1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years

32. If there is a language entrance requirement, were your courses at Gideon Welles accepted to meet the requirements?

33. Were you given college credit for work done at GHS?

34. If so, how much credit? (check one)

1 semester 2 semesters 3 semesters 4 semesters
5 semesters 6 semesters Other N/A

35. Were you advanced to a higher level of language study as a result of your language study at GHS?

36. If so, to which level?

2d semester, level 1 1st semester, level 2
2d semester, level 2 1st semester, level 3
2d semester, level 3 Other

37. Is there a foreign language requirement for graduation from your college or university?

38. If you are taking a language now, how would you compare yourself to the others in your class? Check one.

Above average Average
Poor N/A
Comments:

39. Is language proficiency a desirable skill for the profession you are considering?

40. Should we be offering other languages in Glastonbury?

41. Which ones?

Chinese German Italian Japanese
Other

42. If so, at which grade levels should these be introduced? Check one.
5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___
9 ___ 10 ___ 11 ___ 12 ___
43. Do you feel we should be offering French in elementary school?
44. If so, beginning at what grade level? (Check one).
3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___

Please rank the following aspects of our program. Rank 1 to 5, with 5 the highest.

45. Staff preparation.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
46. Materials and texts.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
47. Scheduling of classes.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
48. Opportunity to begin a language in elementary school.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
49. Usefulness of language laboratory.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
50. Opportunities for travel abroad.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
51. Extracurricular activities.
1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___
52. Communication skills.
Yes ___ No ___ As is ___ Adequate ___
53. Composition.
Yes ___ No ___ As is ___ Adequate ___
54. Reading literature.
Yes ___ No ___ As is ___ Adequate ___
55. Reading magazines or contemporary articles.
Yes ___ No ___ As is ___ Adequate ___
56. Language for business.
Yes ___ No ___
57. Language for medical personnel.
Yes ___ No ___
58. Language for travel.
Yes ___ No ___
59. Interdisciplinary courses such as language and social studies or language and vocational courses.
Yes ___ No ___

Appendix C
Parent Questionnaire

Attitude

1. Do you feel your child is developing a positive attitude toward the study of foreign language?

2. Do you feel your child is developing a positive attitude toward the people and culture being studied in the language class?

Instruction

1. Do you feel the language program provides your child with a planned program of skill development in:

listening__ speaking__ reading__ writing__
understanding various cultures__

2. If you feel these skills are being developed in the foreign language program, do you perceive any transfer to other academic areas?

3. Do you feel that the language program meets the individual needs of your child?

4. If your child entered the school system after third grade, do you feel your child was integrated into the language program successfully?

Materials

1. Do you feel the materials and equipment available are appropriate and adequate for meeting the needs of your child?

2. Are there sufficient supplementary materials for your child, e.g., library books, records, tapes?

Evaluation

1. Do you feel there is careful, continuous measurement and evaluation of your child's progress in language?

2. Do you feel that the amount of homework given is appropriate?

3. Do you feel that the type of homework given is appropriate for your child?

Activities

Do you feel that the extracurricular activities planned and provided are beneficial to your child, e.g., performances, cultural project, field trips, language clubs (Gideon Welles)?

Communication

1. Do you feel that you are well informed about the objectives of the language program?

2. Do you feel the foreign language report card used in the elementary school is clear and useful to you?

Future Goals

1. Should additional languages be offered in Glastonbury?

2. Which languages?

Arabic German Italian Japanese Mandarin Other

3. At which grade level should additional languages begin?

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

4. Do you feel that French should begin before grade 7? At which level?

K 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Do you feel that Spanish should begin at an earlier grade level? If so, at which level?

K 1 2

6. Would you favor the establishment of an immersion language program in the elementary school?

7. If you are multilingual or have traveled or studied abroad, would you be interested in becoming a resource for the language department, e.g., visit classes, show slides, participate in extracurricular activities?

8. If you are involved in the international business or academic community, would you be interested in collaborating financially or educationally with the language department? If so, please give name, address, and phone number.

9. If we were to expand the summer school offerings, would you be interested in having your child study a language in summer school?

10. If a summer exchange program in France or Spain were provided, would you be interested in having your child participate?

11. Are you interested in hosting exchange students or teaching assistants in your home?

I would like to discuss my child's foreign language program. Please call me in June. ___

Testing and Elementary School Foreign Language Programs

John W. Oller, Jr.

1. Testing in Elementary School Language Programs: Defining the State of the Art.

For this paper, we need to develop a definition of foreign language testing that is especially geared to the various aspects of evaluating the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary grades. Unfortunately, as Gray, Rhodes, Campbell, and Snow observed in an extensive study of elementary school foreign language programs (following up studies by Rhodes, Tucker, and Clark, and Rhodes and Schreibstein), "few schools, if any, had systematic evaluations of their students' foreign language proficiency" (p. 3). Or, as observed by Rhodes and Oxford (p. 56), in 31% of the 1,416 elementary schools responding to their survey, it was reported that no provision was made at higher levels (middle-school and high school) for advances achieved in elementary school programs. Students who had taken a language in elementary school were typically placed in beginning-level language classes along with students who had experienced no previous foreign language instruction. In an additional 49% of the elementary programs reporting (p. 55), FLES students could enroll in more advanced levels, but it was unclear that provision had been made to ensure that the FLES background of those students specifically qualified them for the higher placement levels or that they could not in fact have moved up higher still.

At the point of articulation between elementary and middle-school, or between middle-school and high school, some of the benefits from FL study in the elementary grades, therefore, are probably falling between the cracks. Nor is this state of affairs recently developed. Oller and Nagato observed that lack

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of articulation between elementary and higher levels was apparently the main factor in washing out by grade 11 any effects of six to eight years of English in Japanese elementary schools observed (288 subjects: 104 at grade 7, 81 at grade 9, and 103 at grade 11). The most obvious explanation was that students who had studied English in elementary school were lumped together with those who had not and the former were forced to mark time while the others caught up—a process that took about four years.

Although researchers have often called attention to the problem of inadequate articulation between elementary schools and higher levels (see Cummins, 1981; Wong Fillmore; Campbell; Gray et al.; Rhodes and Oxford; Heining-Boynton), it is not always overtly mentioned that a critical missing ingredient, perhaps the factor most directly responsible for better articulation where it exists, is testing. Articulation between levels requires evaluation to assure continuity and to enable educators to direct streams of incoming students into appropriate classes. In addition, elementary school language instruction should be subject to continuous assessment after students have been placed.

In their extensive survey of FLES programs in the U.S. (1,416 elementary programs and 1,349 secondary ones responding), Rhodes and Oxford asked about testing and evaluation only in reference to problem areas. Specifically, they included in a list of possible choices the inadequacy of placement and proficiency tests along with shortage of funding, inadequate in-service training, inadequate articulation between elementary and higher programs, and eight other possible problem areas (plus an option of "other"). Needless to say, testing and evaluation were not areas of major concern when compared with other items on the list. Presumably, it was politic (and entirely appropriate) not to ask about the evaluation and testing procedures employed since previous research had shown that almost none are (cf. Gray et al.).

In a recent survey of Michigan FLES programs (26 programs responding), Heining-Boynton reported that about half the programs were evaluated annually "by the building principal" and an equal number reported no "provisions for articulation at the junior high or high school" level (p. 250). Since school principals are only rarely specialists in languages and would not usually refer to specific test data on children in FLES programs, one cannot know the basis of their evaluation. The implication of their responses is similar to the specific finding by Gray et al. that actual testing and systematic program evaluation in FLES are almost non-existent.

When compared with other "basic skill" areas of the curriculum, e.g., math, reading, primary language skills, writing skills, which are commonly evaluated by some kind of systematic testing, we get a strong impression that FLES programs suffer in a variety of ways as a direct or indirect result of inadequate testing and evaluation. Therefore, an enriched acquaintance with language testing theory, research, and practice might benefit the broad spectrum of elementary-school language educators.

Rhodes and Schreibstein, Gray et al., and, elsewhere in this volume, Pesola and Curtain distinguish among types of elementary school language programs: immersion (full and partial), FLES, and FLEX. For the purposes of the present discussion, the term "elementary school foreign language" will be used as a cover term, with qualifiers inserted as needed. Bearing the distinctions among types of program in mind, however, a few words on goals may be in order.

Of immersion programs, Gray et al. write: "... students should be able to communicate on topics appropriate to their age almost as well as their counterparts in French- or Spanish-speaking countries." If this statement were generalized to cover instruction in any target language and, if it were recognized that the aim of native-speaker proficiency is more or less a limiting ideal (see esp. the discussion by Bachman and Savignon and by Lowe, re the *ACTFL Guidelines*), I believe there would be a fairly general consensus among language teachers. Implicit in the goal of immersion programs is providing access to the cultural and experiential wealth that knowledge of a foreign language makes possible.

In support of the aims of communicative proficiency and cultural exposure, I will refer specifically to only three of many sources. Heining-Boynton reports that 92% of the Michigan FLES educators participating in her survey "agreed that teaching verbal communication is a desired outcome" and 96% concurred in the goal of teaching appreciation of a foreign culture. Rhodes and Oxford observe that only about 3% of the U.S. elementary schools offer the sort of programs likely to yield "some degree of communicative competence" and yet that goal is implicit in all the programs they surveyed with the exception of the FLEX-type. Swain and Lapkin, for instance, say that "Early immersion education began in Canada with the idea that through the exclusive use of French by the teachers in communicating with their students, the second language would be acquired incidentally.... Indeed, one might characterize language acquisition as production flowing from comprehension (Krashen, 1981)" (p. 6). At any rate, the rest of this paper depends on such a general goal as an ideal to be aimed for.

2. What Is FL Testing?

In order to obtain a more explicit definition of foreign language testing, some logical distinctions must be introduced. The aim is to include nothing that is not necessary, and, if possible, to introduce everything that will be required. In addition to questions already posed, we will also address the place of testing in the elementary school foreign language curriculum; its necessity; how it can best be done; special considerations when the focus is on the elementary school;

existing tests; general evaluative procedures or proficiency guidelines that can provide a sound basis for elementary school testing and evaluation; tests designed or adapted for evaluating aspects of elementary school language programs; and the Canadian language test batteries (Swain and Lapkin).

2.1. The Stigma of Testing

Teachers often regard testing as a necessary evil, and adult students and even some teachers go so far as to question its necessity (Upshur, 1969c). Children are apt to develop a certain apprehensiveness from some of their first experiences with testing. As John Upshur pointed out, "test" after all is a four-letter word, a word too close for comfort to an obscenity. The stigma and the fear, however, need to be recognized and dealt with, because if the teacher develops a healthy attitude toward the place of testing in the whole elementary school foreign language curriculum, students from the earliest stages of FL instruction will come to see tests as communicative activities hardly distinct from others that take place in the classroom.

What is a language test? How can we tell better tests from those that are not so good? What can we learn from the relevant research? And, how do language tests fit into the whole foreign language curriculum? What do they tell us about the role of language in intellectual development or about the impact of studying a foreign language or even becoming bilingual on intellect in general? Does language testing research offer any special arguments in favor of early foreign language instruction? And, finally, are there testing procedures that are particularly applicable or inapplicable with children at the various ages represented in elementary schools?

We may start with three important premises, which we will stipulate from the outset as axiomatic: (1) A language test is any discourse-processing activity that can be scored or quantified by degree of success. From this starting axiom, it follows that any activity at which a child cannot succeed to any measurable degree is for that person an invalid test. A more noteworthy corollary is: (2) Any language teaching/learning activity, to the extent that it achieves a measurable (or definable) degree of success, is a potential language test. The converse of (2) generates another valid corollary: (3) To the extent that it involves discourse processing of a sort conducive to language acquisition, any language test is a teaching/learning activity. Although these premises are definitional, I aim to justify and firmly establish their axiomatic status.

2.2. All Expressions of Meaning Involve Testing

Every genuine attempt to express meaning or to communicate includes an implicit test: the originator checks the representation as it is produced to see if it expresses the intended meaning. Although it must be admitted that even adults may not ask such evaluative questions consciously, and that children up to about grade 3 may find them almost impossible to consider, from early infancy the very possibility of enlisting the help or participation of others in common efforts through communication entails a tacit criterion of success, and therefore suggests a measure of well-formedness that is implicitly associated with every attempt at social interaction. Even when we express meaning only for our own personal benefit, pleasure, or amazement, an implicit test of well-formedness is involved.

Does what I am hearing, saying, thinking, reading, or writing make sense? Of course, a person may arbitrarily deny the need for representations to conform faithfully to intentions, but only at the risk of advertising his or her own insincerity. In such a case, all the communications of such a person become suspect and essentially uninterpretable. Deviousness may be valued by the devious, but it is the very thing that makes trustworthiness a scarce commodity among liars, thieves, and criminals.[1]

If mere esthetic expression is the intention, then just that is the criterion implicitly applied, i.e., is the utterance poetic, appealing, poignant, etc.? If an interjection is intended, then that intention is the metric against which the utterance is implicitly assessed. Such metrics are never simple, since interjections or any other sort of representation always involve propositional complexities. Consider the evaluative meanings implied by any interjection, e.g., "Super!," "Oh, no!," "You did it!," "You fool!," "Look out!" Or consider the rich range of meanings implicit in any actually uttered epithet or expletive.

If the expression of truth about known or inferred facts is the intention, then the degree of correspondence between the facts and the expression is the ultimate criterion of well-formedness.

2.3. Correspondence as the Final Arbiter

In 1941, Albert Einstein claimed of thought in general, and language use in particular, that "everything depends on the degree to which words and word-combinations correspond to the world of impression" (in Oller, 1989a, p. 62). Now it follows that every genuine attempt at communication in the classroom involves a correspondence test. Everything that the teacher does by way of communication, or expression of meaning, is implicitly evaluated in terms of whether it (a) fits the teacher's intention and (b) expresses that intention in a way that is accessible to the student addressed. By the same token, every attempt at communication on the part of the student is assessed at once in terms of (a) its perceived intention and (b) the well-formedness of the expression or act relative to that intention. Beyond this, for every act of a representative sort, there is ultimately (c) a question of its correspondence or appropriateness to "the world of impression," just as Einstein insisted.

If it is granted that an external world is a logical necessity in order for communication to occur (condition c, above), it will follow that intentions of persons are real facts within such a world and that the correspondence of a representation with an intention is a correspondence with a fact in the world. That is, as Charles Sanders Peirce insisted, the problem of truth is strictly a question of fact entirely independent of opinions or thinking. But it will be helpful to many readers to show why Einstein put his general rule the way he did. More specifically, why did he insist on positing an external world? Is this gambit necessary to a theory of language use, acquisition, teaching, and testing?

The answer will necessarily be affirmative, and will moreover remove at one stroke many of the apparent mysteries associated with language curricula and tests. Furthermore, the nearly infinite complexity of methods of instruction and the trite references to that well-known and eternally acknowledged complexity, can be reduced to relatively few principles concerning methods of instruction (and testing) that actually work in practice. It turns out that if we take the world of experience seriously, many of the superficial and ultimately unnecessary distinctions between methods of teaching and testing evaporate. Similarly, a limitless latitude of successful teaching and testing techniques emerges, a latitude that applies to the full spectrum of FL teaching from elementary school through college levels.

2.4. Proof that an External World Is Necessary

Skeptics will demand a logical proof that positing an external world (requirement c above) is truly necessary. Such a proof can readily be supplied along the lines of the semiotic theory developed by Charles Sanders Peirce. That theory was elaborated intentionally by John Dewey, who credited Peirce, and coincidentally by Albert Einstein, who may have never read Peirce at all.[2] The three agreed, for essentially the same reasons, that there is an external world and that persons and groups are in it. Readers who entertain doubt about the external world, or who are merely sympathetic with those who do, may find a logical demonstration useful.[3] The proof of an external world affords a logical foundation for a theory of communication, language acquisition, teaching, and testing. It provides a sound theoretical basis for understanding and explaining why some methods of language instruction achieve a modicum of success while others seem to accomplish very little.

Further, the argument removes any possible logical objection to language testing. If all communication necessarily involves an implicit test of correspondence between expression and intention, and ultimately between expression and an external world, language testing cannot possibly be more objectionable in principle than communication itself.

Properly understood, a language test is merely an act of communication evaluated according to explicit criteria. As such, language tests need be no more threatening or unpleasant than participation in a language community in the most common ways. Nor, apart from quantifiability (scorability or scalability), do language tests constitute a kind of activity logically distinct from any other communication that goes on in the classroom.

2.5. *Relevance to the Classroom*

Language teaching (or testing) which deals fast and loose with facts and tries to present (or assess control of) linguistic forms without linking them to determinate facts of experience will fall short of its legitimate goals (recall Einstein's assessment of a link between words and impressions). Presumably these goals are for students to understand and produce discourse in the target language and for them to have access to the culture and literature of that language. It also follows that language tests which attempt to evaluate surface-forms of the target language independently of intentions, and without linking them to the world of experience, will also fail to a similar degree and for the same reasons.

In fact, a general statement can be made: the degree of success of language instruction (or testing) will be in direct proportion to the degree the surface-forms in the target language are determinately linked with known facts in the experience of the students.

3. Language as Means as Well as End

Cummins argues that cognitive abilities in general are both mediators and outcome variables since they "contribute to school success and can also be regarded as an outcome of schooling" (see his footnote; 1986, p. 23). Language proficiency is among such cognitive abilities. It is both a product of communication and a means to the fruits and benefits of communication. Therefore, when we evaluate language proficiency, we are evaluating an outcome of communication as well as the essential mediatory role of language, including all the intellectual and other activities associated with it.

3.1. *The Dual Character of Language Tests*

A language test engages communicative capacity and assesses a particular act of communication. This dual aspect has been stressed recently by Bachman and Savignon and by Bachman and Palmer (see their discussion of "traits" and "methods" in language testing), though with an emphasis toward psychometrics rather than pragmatics or semiotics. From a pragmatic point of view, a language test is a performance in a particular language on a certain discourse-processing task, which aims to tell us something about a general capacity to perform in an indefinite range of similar tasks (cf. Lowe). From the degree of success achieved in the performance, we seek to judge a general competence (Spolsky, 1968; Spolsky, et al.).[4] That sort of general competence is what we usually have in mind when we use a term like "language proficiency," "communicative competence," or "communicative language proficiency."

3.2. Language Proficiency and Intellectual Development.

From a slightly different angle, language proficiency may be regarded as one of the primary mediator variables that affect the development of the full range of human cognitive abilities (cf. Binet and Simon). Apparently this is what Einstein had in mind when he wrote:

> We might be inclined to attribute to the act of thinking complete independence from language if the individual formed or were able to form his concepts without the verbal guidance of his environment. Yet most likely the mental shape of an individual, growing up under such conditions, would be very poor. Thus we may conclude that the mental development of the individual and his way of forming concepts depend to a high degree upon language (1941, in Oller, 1989b, p. 62).

To agree with Einstein's statement is to recognize the role that the broader community naturally plays in the development of an individual. Or, as Piaget put it:

> ... the system of collective signs does not create the symbolic function [in the child], but naturally develops it to a degree that the individual by himself would never know (1947, in Oller, 1989b, p. 207).

For somewhat different reasons Vygotsky [1896-1934] reached a similar conclusion: "The internalization of cultural forms of behavior involves the reconstruction of psychological activity on the basis of sign operations" (n.d., in Cole et al., p. 57). He argued:

> Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological).... All of the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals (in Cole et al., p. 57; cf. Luria and Luria and Yudovich).

Arguing (ca. 1868) from a substantially different theoretical perspective than Vygotsky's, Peirce agreed in the role of social interaction at least in terms of its logical consequences. Peirce wrote:

> The real ... is that which, sooner or later, information and reasoning would finally result in, and which is therefore independent of the vagaries of me and you. Thus, the very origin of the conception of reality shows that this conception essentially involves the notion of a *community*, without definite limits, and capable of an indefinite increase of knowledge (Peirce's emphasis, in Moore et al., p. 239).

The main difference from Vygotsky was that Peirce *insisted that every* thought is representational in character and is qualitatively symbolic (a purely abstract representation) in its stripped-down form. In both *Thought and Language* and *Mind in Society*, Vygotsky contended that thinking originates in social activities which are only subsequently "internalized." From Peirce's perspective any external act without a prior internal representation, other than an accidental one, is a logical impossibility.

That difference aside, Peirce, Einstein, Piaget, and Vygotsky all agreed in the hypothesis that language contributes in a vital way to intellectual development. On this point there has been no counter-argument. Moreover, there is substantial evidence from many sources in its favor. Language testing research is among those positive sources. For instance, Oller and Perkins discuss a number of different approaches to the question. A review of the relevant psychological and educational research, in the first chapter of *Language in Education: Testing the Tests*, shows that language proficiency in one form or another (e.g., reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, ability to solve word-problems) figures prominently in school achievement tests and in tests aimed at verbal intelligence.

Stump studied fifth and seventh graders in Saint Louis and showed that a substantial amount of the variance in both achievement tests and IQ tests could be predicted from scores on language tasks such as taking dictation or filling in blanks in prose (cloze).

No one can seriously doubt that first-language proficiency plays a large part in verbal intelligence and achievement tests of all sorts. A content analysis of the tests themselves is sufficient to disprove any contrary claim. Gunnarsson used a somewhat novel approach by extracting items from a diversity of achievement, intelligence, language, and personality tests and creating from them "The Gunnarsson Test of Standardized Tests." His challenge was whether the experts could look at any given item and guess correctly the kind of test it came from. In applications of the procedure with clinicians, diagnosticians, and others who are often responsible for interpreting test scores, performance on Gunnarsson's test is rarely better than chance. Moreover, all the tests sampled clearly involve skill and knowledge that is indistinguishable from what is generally meant by language proficiency. The bottom-line of Gunnarsson's approach is that content-analysis of tests reveals a substantial element of language proficiency in a wide range of achievement, intelligence, aptitude, and personality tests.

Pros and cons of the argument have been amply discussed by Cummins, Carroll, Cummins and Swain, Laesch and van Kleeck, and Boyle, but no one actually denies the premise that in some manner or other the advancement of primary language proficiency is important to academic achievement. In a 1987 study, Laesch and van Kleeck presented evidence showing a significant correlation for 28 bilingual Mexican-American children at the third-grade level between scores on the *California Test of Basic Skills* and a cloze test. A popular test often used with elementary-age children, however, the *Language Assessment Scales*, was unrelated to achievement. Presumably the weakness of the latter can be attributed to the superficial character of the *LAS* as compared to the deeper, more pragmatic demands of a cloze test. Streiff (1978) achieved similar results with cloze procedure and with a substantially larger bilingual population. Her results showed that a considerable amount of the variance in standardized achievement scores (over 50%) was predictable on the basis of a simple fill-in-the-blank cloze task.

The implication is that language proficiency is somehow linked to intellectual growth. Einstein's causal explanation is appealing (section 2.3, above): namely, that the development of one's primary language provides direction and focus for intellectual growth in general. The reverse also seems plausible: that mental growth will tend to nudge language development along, too. In fact, a dynamic interaction seems likely. At any rate, the expectation of a causal relationship between language development and mental growth in general is well sustained by the research literature.

It is often said that an understanding of one's primary language is somehow improved by acquisition of, or even a general acquaintance with, some other language. A statement often quoted, the National Commission on Excellence in Education claimed explicitly that: "... study of a foreign language ... heightens awareness and comprehension of one's native tongue" (NCEE, p. 26).

For most educated persons the opportunity for such growth is best afforded in the FL classroom. It is often the basis for the glimmerings of understanding about what grammar in its abstract sense is all about.[5]

A noteworthy 1987 study by Cooper must be mentioned in this connection. Cooper showed a substantial relation between length of FL study and *Scholastic Aptitude Test* (*SAT*) verbal scores. It is true that Eddy had shown in 1981 that amount of FL study was positively correlated with improvement in *SAT* scores even when verbal ability (as measured by the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills* [Hieronymus et al.] and the *Cognitive Abilities Test* [Thorndike and Hagen]) was controlled. The additional element contributed by Cooper, however, was to show that non-foreign language concentrators enjoyed no similar benefits and that a significant contrast in verbal SAT scores between FL students and non-FL students remained even after the reading score on the *California Achievement Tests* was controlled as a co-variate.

Of course, there remains the complaint that students who choose to study FLs are not only of higher verbal ability to start with, demonstrated by both Eddy and Cooper, but that they may advance more rapidly than non-FL counterparts over the course of their educational experience. Therefore, such a difference in the long-term growth rate might account for the differences that Cooper observed between FL and non-FL students. Also, it might be claimed that growth in *SAT* verbal scores is due in part to age and maturation and that the tested population may have ranged in age.

But even these counter-arguments ring hollow when the specific benefits claimed for FL study are considered. Cooper argues quite convincingly that FL study may enhance a student's ability to acquire vocabulary in context, to develop a sensitivity for nuances of meaning, to use context more effectively for inferences, to attend to style, genre, theme, and even author's viewpoint in discourse material. If these latter arguments are taken into consideration, they offset doubts about the validity of the claim that FL study will enhance verbal abilities in general.

Beyond the development of verbal skills per se, FL instruction may provide a useful scaffolding from which to develop a perspective on the character and scope of cultural differences. Some indeed have argued that a fairly well developed bilingualism may engender greater cognitive flexibility and may change the capacity as well as the willingness of students to entertain different perspectives on the world of experience. Certainly FL study tends to provide prima facie evidence of different ways of viewing the world.

3.3. Extending the Argument to Bilingualism

If the case for primary language proficiency as a mediative variable in cognitive growth is a sound one, would not the development of a second language through foreign language study tend to be advantageous for similar reasons? Wouldn't becoming bilingual to some degree of proficiency be beneficial to the broad spectrum of school-age individuals who might be exposed to such study?

Cummins argues that there are probably two thresholds, one low and the other high, that influence the degree to which second language acquisition will be beneficial. At the moment, it seems that both terms can only be defined loosely. The low threshold, a low cognitive limit achieved by most children roughly between ages 5 and 7, needs to be achieved in the child's first language, before the study of another will be profitable. It is this sort of threshold, apparently, that Met had in mind when she suggested that "children with serious delay in first language development" along with several other categories "should not be in an immersion program" (p. 313). Prior to surpassing the low threshold, according to Cummins, the child is hardly ready for academic work at all.

The high threshold, also defined only tentatively, will determine the degree to which a bilingual may benefit intellectually from having acquired more than one language. The idea is that the bilingual must surpass the high threshold in order to experience certain expected benefits of bilingualism, e.g., greater ability to appreciate and utilize symbols and greater "metalinguistic awareness," i.e., sensitivity to the arbitrariness and conventionality of linguistic symbols. Apparently this higher cognitive limit must be surpassed in both languages in order for the benefits of bilingualism to be optimal.

The research seems to support both low and high thresholds (Cummins and Mulcahy; Duncan and DeAvila; Hakuta and Diaz; Kessler and Quinn; Cummins, 1984). Though as Hakuta and Lambert have both shown, there is a history of debate concerning the deleterious versus beneficial effects of bilingualism. Until recent years the argument tended to be based more on partisan interests than on evidence or sound thinking. Formerly, especially in the U.S., there was a widespread prejudice against "bilingualism" based on research showing that minority language children tended to get low scores on IQ tests. It scarcely occurred to the persons interpreting the research that the IQ tests were mainly measures of English language proficiency—something that the minorities in question had not yet had the opportunity to acquire (Oller and Perkins; Hakuta; Oller and Damico).[6]

Regardless of the eventual disposition of the questions concerning intellectual development, including Cummins' hypotheses about thresholds, children can profit intellectually from acquiring at least one additional language in school (Eddy; Cooper). Because children are more likely to achieve native-like skills than adults, and because children have a longer time ahead of them to make use of language skills, it makes sense to begin foreign language instruction early. If we assume that Cummins is right about the lower threshold, foreign language instruction should not be undertaken until and unless the child surpasses the low threshold in the primary language(s). And, unless the instruction carries the child beyond the high threshold in the foreign language, the full benefits of that instruction will, presumably, not be enjoyed. For this reason, if the results of Gray et al. are taken into consideration, immersion models or partial immersion programs should be preferred above traditional FLES or FLEX approaches.

Among the complicating variables requiring further longitudinal research is the question of the relative effectiveness of foreign language instruction and whether it can generally succeed in getting students past the high threshold, and if so, how long it will take to do so. Rhodes and Oxford (p. 51) paraphrase the National Commission on Excellence in Education, which concluded that "achieving proficiency in a foreign language takes from four to six years" and that, therefore, study should "begin in the elementary grades."

At this point, the question of methods of instruction and their long-term impact looms large. If FLEX or even traditional FLES were the model for instruction, it is doubtful that even "four to six years" would be enough.

However, as Gray et al. note, "There is an extraordinarily close match between the optimal conditions for successful language acquisition as assumed by many theorists and those conditions found in immersion programs." (p. 57)

4. Theory and Research in Language Testing

In 1972 John Clark argued that foreign language testing must be judged against the curriculum, and no doubt this is true. Clark would agree, however, that the curriculum in its turn must conform to a valid theory of language acquisition. Valid teaching will no doubt suggest ways of doing valid testing, but the curriculum cannot be the ultimate criterion of validity. We must look beyond any particular foreign language curriculum in order to come to grips with the deeper and more fundamental questions concerning what language is and how a language can in fact be acquired.

If we look to success stories, cases where substantial proficiency, even native-like in some cases, is attained (cf. Oller and Richard-Amato), we soon discover that successful language acquisition always requires two ingredients, one primarily cognitive and the other affective: (1) a special sort of access to the target language; and (2) sufficient motivation. Each of these requires elaboration.

Access to the target language cannot consist of mere exposure to it. Deeper comprehension and reasoning must come into play (cf. Stevick; Oller and Richard-Amato; Richard-Amato). Mouthing utterances in the language, merely listening to large numbers of them, or merely viewing or even reproducing large quantities of printed text in the target language will not necessarily result in either comprehension or acquisition (cf. Krashen, 1985). The access has to be such that it enables the student to link discourse in the target language with experience in the world. Moreover, this linking has to conform, more or less, to the native speaker's way of making sense of the target language. In other words, the student's experience with the target language must involve access to its connection to the facts of experience in an intuitively normal and satisfying way, one that the community that uses that language would comprehend and thus tacitly approve (cf. Peirce, in Moore et al., p. 239). This process has been called pragmatic mapping and is the *sine qua non* of the language acquisition process (see Oller and Richard-Amato, esp. Chapters 1 and 2).

The second ingredient, sufficient motivation, is difficult to define and is not entirely separable from the pragmatic-mapping requirement. In fact every successful act of communication hinges on an expenditure of effort, or a commitment of attentional resources (either of which requires motivation) to understand or be understood. Wallace Lambert and some of his colleagues, notably R.C. Gardner, have stressed the importance of motivation to language acquisition and language teaching. There has been some disagreement about how to measure motivational and other affective variables (see, e.g., Oller, 1979, pp. 105–49; Gardner, 1980, 1985), but there has been no disagreement about the crucial role that affective variables must play in language acquisition. Piaget (1981) suggested that affect is the energy that runs the cognitive engine. The metaphor expresses aptly the interdependence of cognition and affect as dual aspects of intellect.

4.1. Information, Communication, and Authenticity

In trying to characterize accessibility of pragmatic-mapping relations and the motivational quality of a given text or discourse, there is also wide-spread agreement that terms like "information," "communication," and "authenticity" must be brought into play. In his award-winning book, *Memory, Meaning, and Method*, Earl Stevick urged that meaningfulness is perhaps the most critical element in determining the comprehensibility, recallability, and acquirability of material presented in a foreign language.

More recently, it has been claimed (e.g., Brock) that teachers who ask questions to which they already know the answers ("display questions") are not engaging in optimally meaningful communication, whereas teachers who ask for information not already known to them ("referential questions") are performing in a more authentic manner. No doubt there is an element of truth in this claim. However, the relevant term, "meaningfulness" or "information," requires definition. As we will see, after a brief excursion to obtain such a definition, an adequate theory will show that even "display questions" are not entirely devoid of information, even new information. They allow for a communication gap between student and teacher. The legitimacy of our objection to such questions must, therefore, reside elsewhere.

Information. If students are asked to tell the teacher something the teacher already knows, the exchange lacks some element of normal communication. Some would even say "new information" is the missing ingredient. Or that no "communication gap" is crossed.

Such an objection inevitably suggests a double-barrelled question about information, namely, what is it and how do we determine if it is new or old? The most widely accepted and least technical way to define information is to describe it as the basis for making some distinction in experience. This was the root of the definition used by Shannon and Weaver in their mathematical theory of communication. Anticipating their mathematical definition and at the same time generalizing the definition of information to its logical limits, Peirce had defined information as the product of two aspects of meaning which he termed breadth and depth. He proposed the formula:

Information = Breadth x Depth

Although we will eschew the technical aspects of this formula, because of the critical place of "information" in any theory of communication and because of the central role played by communication in language use, acquisition, and in FL instruction, the character of information demands a closer look.

Philosophers back to Aristotle drew a distinction between two aspects of meaning. On the one hand, there is the actual, real, particular, unique aspect that pertains to experience in the world. This side of meaning has been variously referred to as "reference," "extension," "content," "denotation," etc. In modern times the term pragmatics more or less embraces this domain of meaning. Peirce, however, preferred to call it "breadth." For him, the breadth of a representation could be found by asking to which (and how many) actual things, events, relations, states of affairs in experience the representation in question might apply.

A phrase such as "the President of the United States," for example, might be applied to any or all the presidents who have served our nation. The breadth could be narrowed by adding the qualifying phrase "in 1989" or broadened by changing the form to "heads of state." Breadth, in Peirce's sense, cannot always be determined exactly, but relative degrees can certainly be distinguished.

While breadth pertains to the sort of meaning that depends on actual facts in the world of experience, the other dimension, depth, pertains to the sort of meaning that is virtual (not actual), universal (not particular), and abstract (not concrete).

Essentially the same distinction is made by the FL profession from a somewhat different angle. For instance, in the opening paragraphs describing the recently produced ACTFL Japanese Proficiency Guidelines (p. 589), the authors speak of "proficiency-based" versus "achievement-based" descriptions of language ability. Whereas proficiency is conceived in general, abstract, and perhaps even universal terms, achievement is construed to apply to particular and concrete curricular objectives, methods, activities, and even certain textual materials, vocabulary items, and structures.

The authors write, "These guidelines are not based on a particular linguistic theory or pedagogical method, since the guidelines are proficiency-based, as opposed to achievement-based, and are intended to be used for global assessment" (p. 589). The parallel with the distinction between the intensive (depth) and extensive (breadth) aspects of information are not perfect only because the definitions of proficiency and achievement cannot be perfectly made in practice (though Bachman and Palmer, and Bachman and Savignon, would like to achieve a more perfect separation).

As the ACTFL authors themselves put it, "These guidelines should not be considered the definitive version, since the construction and utilization of language proficiency guidelines is a dynamic, interactive process" (p. 589). In other words, proficiency as an abstract and virtual capacity underlying actual instances of language use cannot be totally defined apart from those particular instances (i.e., apart from "achievement").

As Lowe argued (p. 396), the issue may be construed as a top-down process (in our terms "proficiency-based" or "intensive"), or as a bottom-up process ("achievement-based" or "extensive"). The intention of the *Guidelines*, however, has always been, as Lowe insists, to keep the abstract, virtual, optimally general, or even universal side of language abilities in view. Lowe writes, "It may be that testers operate with idealizations ... the 'virtual text' grows in the rater's mind ... emerging ... from test after test—probably yielding the idealized language user Bachman and Savignon envision" (p. 395). Or, at least, we may hope that the interviewer's concept of what "proficiency" is becomes increasingly adequate with experience and that it starts with some validity. It at least aims to describe an "idealized language user." It is this idealization aspect that puts the term proficiency precisely on a parallel with the intensive, universal, virtual, abstract, or depth aspect of information.

Philosophers have variously referred to the depth aspect of information as "sense," "intension," "comprehension," or "connotation." While terms such as "the morning star," "the evening star," and "Venus" are all said to have the same "referent" or the same "extension," they have different "senses" or "intensions."

That is to say, with respect to their referring capacity (breadth) they are identical. All refer to the same physical object. On the other hand, with respect to the other meanings they call to mind—their sense, intension, or depth—they are distinct.

Peirce argued that it was essential to combine breadth and depth in a multiplicative way to obtain an estimate of information. If either dimension were squished to zero, he claimed, then the informativeness of the representation would be reduced to nothing. An example of a term with depth but without any breadth would be "the present King of France" since there is none. Still the phrase has depth and enables us to imagine what would be required in order for the term to have an actual referent. To that extent it may lack information (having no breadth) but it is not entirely without meaning since it has some depth.

Suppose we apply Peirce's theory of information to the case of a common "display question." Say the foreign language teacher asks in the target language, "Is there a clock on the wall?" Say that there is a clock on the wall. If the teacher is not blind or unobservant we may suppose that the answer to the question is already known to the teacher. But the teacher may or may not know what answer any student may give or even whether the question (presented in the target language) will be understood.

Experience shows that students may repeat the question instead of answering it (Michael Long, personal communication, 1988). They may not know one or more of the lexical items of the question and may therefore give the wrong answer for having misunderstood the question. The student may fail to perceive that the question is in fact a question, or may give the right answer for the wrong reasons. And a little imagination will show that many other possibilities exist. More importantly, a little classroom research will show that all the anticipated possibilities at one time or another are likely to occur (Long, personal communication).

Now, it follows that there will be an inevitable element of new information in the response to any display question whatsoever. Therefore, it cannot reasonably be argued that the presence or absence of information per se is what troubles us about display questions. This point should be borne in mind. Still, it is safe to say that something is odd about the sort of "communication" that display questions ask for. Such acts seem to lack "authenticity." Fortunately, we are now in a position to define both communication and authenticity.[7]

Communication. A sharing of information, communication occurs whenever representations are offered by one person so as to enable a second person to infer the intended meaning. The second person need not agree with the intended meaning. All that is required is some sharing of information. Neither is it necessary that all the information available to one party become available to the other. Communication occurs to some degree if any information whatever is shared. By definition, however, it may be stipulated that perfect communication requires a complete sharing of information, which does not mean that one person's experience becomes completely available to the other. But, to the extent information is shared between two or more parties, common distinctions between elements of experience which are available to one become available to the other.

To the extent that we live in private worlds (as some have been wont to argue) that differ in undefinable ways, our experiences cannot be shared at all. If this definition is accepted, we must also admit that communication is possible with oneself to the extent that the self is capable of occupying more than one logical position in the world of experience. If I can interpret what I say, write, or think, then I can, to that extent, be said to communicate meaningfully with myself.

What would keep such communication from being completely sterile? The only requirement of intra- or interpersonal communication is that the interpretation of any given representation (e.g., perception, thought, or utterance) in terms of another enrich the total supply of information. This, it turns out, is about the smallest requirement that might be imagined. The outcome is that a definition of communication leaves us about where we were before with respect to differentiating sensible classroom activities from nonsensical ones. So, we must look to the third term.

Authenticity. When we say that there is something odd about display questions, we mean that a steady diet of them would be dull. Though neither information nor communication is lacking, there is something absent nevertheless. The missing element is the connectedness of experience in general. This aspect of experience has been variously written about in terms of "relevance," "interest," "significance," or "motivation." For all these terms, I have proposed the term "episodic organization," following Schank and Schank and Abelson.

Relevance, interest, significance all stress the causal connections between elements we attend to in our experience and other elements we have already identified as meriting special attention. In general, those things which bear on the survival and well-being of the individual, the family, and the broader community, will be judged relevant. Those that threaten to disrupt states of affairs and those elements that help restore equilibrium will have intrinsic interest.

Equilibrium, as such, is not intrinsically interesting. To the extent that genuine risk is absent, equilibrium amounts to boredom. On the other hand, to the extent that equilibrium is maintained by tensional oppositions between the law and the criminal element, good and evil, and so forth, even equilibrium is interesting.

Interest, relevance, etc. can be conveniently summed up in terms of "episodic organization." No matter how haphazard it may seem, experience is destined to be interpreted as an interrelated series of complex event structures. Not a mere cultural accretion, structure is a universal requirement for any culture. All mythologies, including the theories of science, to some extent supply an interpretation of the structure of experience. If Karl Lashley is correct, this kind of structure is not merely imagined but is predetermined by the correlation between physiology and physics. Such a correlation is necessary in order for perception and intelligence to exist as logical possibilities. To deny the universal existence of structure in this sense is to limit perceptual and inferential capabilities to only some cultures—not a reasonable theoretical alternative.

The second element of episodic organization normally present in "authentic" acts of communication is motivation. Most acts of communication that occupy our attention in the stream of experience involve some problem, conflict, or disequilibrium that focusses our attention on just the thing that the story or discourse is about. It is the conflict, doubt, or disequilibrium that motivates us. We want to resolve it in order to continue to pursue some desired objective, e.g., to stay alive, provide for the future, protect a loved one, incapacitate an enemy, or give advice.

This can easily be illustrated and understood. We do not go around willy-nilly talking about clocks, watches, blackboards, pencils, and so forth, although, as Jespersen pointed out, one might easily get the impression that Frenchmen do this if one went by the things that students of French are taught to say. Display questions and statements that lack the necessary integration into ordinary experience disturb us because we don't just focus attention randomly on every available topic. Rather, we focus on points of genuine disequilibrium, doubt, conflict, and the like.

A relevant conflict, i.e., one worthy of attention, is one that concerns me or someone I identify with. A story about how I (or someone I care about) nearly got shaded out of a picture is one I am fairly interested in. You will be too to the extent that you identify with me; and to the extent that you see the threat to my existence as having been a genuine one (i.e., one which would have threatened you had you been in a similar spot). Moreover, the potential for sharing experiences (i.e., communicating) will be determined by the extent to which there exists between us a commonness of plans and goals and a common means of representing them.

It follows that a language curriculum cannot be better than the communicative activities that it asks students to participate in. Nor can a language test be more valid than its discourse basis is authentic. If the authenticity of discourse, i.e., episodic organization, determines interest and effort of interlocutors, it can be expected to limit more or less directly the validity of both curriculum and testing. At any rate, it is a central purpose of this paper to demonstrate the probability of this hypothesis. To accomplish this, some reference must be made to the history of language testing research.

4.2. Intuitive Approaches to Language Testing

Among the best language tests yet devised are those based on the intuitive creativity of foreign language teachers. These include such techniques as dictation, essay writing, oral interview, oral or written question-answer exchanges based on an assigned text or dramatization, summarizing, expanding, paraphrasing, translating, repeating, copying, reading aloud, filling in blanks in a text, dramatizing an assigned dialogue, role-playing, giving a speech, debating, improvising, and so forth.

In fact, such tried and true methods are not likely to be replaced any time soon by any standardized tests on the market. Even widely used proficiency descriptors like those found in the *ACTFL Guidelines* may be expected to have only peripheral impact by helping teachers interpret such tasks. This is doubly true at the elementary-school level where teachers typically use materials they prepare on their own and where teacher-training and certification are general weaknesses (Rhodes and Oxford; Heining-Boynton), though some excellent suggestions have been made (cf. Koster; Majhanovich and Fish; esp. Glisan and Phillips). When it comes to tests, the market is smaller than for other classroom materials, and standardized tests are probably even less applicable in view of the great diversity of approaches employed.

Several nineteenth- and twentieth-century leaders of the foreign language profession advocated more communicatively oriented testing procedures. One could scarcely fail to mention Otto Jespersen, Emma Marie Birkmaier, Mary Finocchiaro, Wilga Rivers, and Virginia French Allen. With respect to foreign language teaching, most of these advocates were well established leaders prior to the popularity of quantitative research. Prior to the 1970s, language testing research hardly achieved notable results except for a few isolated studies in the 1960s. Those grand educators, and others like them, were guided by raw genius and love for their students. As cited in the dedication to Savignon's award-winning book, Chaucer's words (sex aside) apply to them: "And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche."

With the advance of linguistic theory, especially the taxonomic structuralism of Leonard Bloomfield and Zellig Harris, in the late 1950s, a dispute arose over analytic versus holistic methods of language testing. Those most influenced by taxonomic linguistics held that holistic language testing, e.g., dictation of target language material, oral interviews (alias graded conversations), essays, and the like were misguided. This view carried forward into the 1960s and became the basis for a noteworthy distinction proposed by John Carroll (1961) between "discrete-point" and "integrative" tests.

Dictation and cloze tests, the latter being created by omitting words from a text and asking examinees to fill in the blanks (see, e.g., Carroll, Carton, and Wilds; Darnell; Spolsky et al.), as archetypes of integrative tests, came to be regarded as a kind of paradigm trial-case of the merits of integrative versus discrete-point tests. They were defended by some (e.g., Valette; Oller; Streiff) and attacked by others (e.g., Lado; Harris; Heaton; Davies). Interestingly, it may be argued that the attempt to address the ensuing controversy through research resulted in the accelerating development of the study of language testing from the 1960s forward.

4.3. An Emergent Thesis: Discrete-Point Theory

The paradigm center of the discrete-point alternative was defined most ably by Robert Lado, though he did not coin the term. Doing so in 1961, Carroll anticipated a persistent controversy. According to the discrete-point model, a sufficient number of items aimed at elements drawn from the several inventories of phonemes, morphemes, lexical items, and syntactic patterns would assure a valid test of language proficiency.[8] In addition, some theorists argued that items should focus on only one domain at a time. (For a discussion of the history of discrete-point language testing, see Oller [1979], pp. 150–230). Items testing phonemic contrasts were not to be mixed with those aimed at testing vocabulary knowledge which should in turn be distinguished from items aimed at syntactic patterns, etc.

Besides distinguishing domains of structure—phonology, morphology, lexicon, and syntax—discrete-point testers also distinguished skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It was often argued, following the discrete-point model, that a certain test was not good if it mixed several skills and/or domains of structure. For instance, Lado contended that the method of giving dictation, a foreign language testing technique popular with language teachers (cf. Valette, 1964; Finocchiaro), was not a good method because it mixed everything together. According to Lado, dictation did not test phonemic contrasts since these were apt to be given away by lexical or syntactic context. It did not test words because the words were "given" by the person reciting the material to be written down. It did not test syntax since the syntax also was "given." Worse yet, according to discrete-point thinking, dictation mingled listening comprehension with writing and reading. It also mixed phonology, vocabulary, morphology, and syntax into a potpourri.

In the final analysis, discrete-point theory was more of a theoretical perspective than a practical one. Had it been influenced much by empirical evidence, it would have had to be radically revised since language students in taking dictation do make many errors in just the domains that Lado claimed were not tested. For instance, in actual dictation protocols we find evidence of phonemic contrasts that have been obliterated, e.g., "collect" is apt to be rendered "correct" by an Asian writing a dictation in English. Or, complex consonant clusters of certain types of morphological inflections are apt to be omitted. Furthermore, those who make these errors in taking dictation are apt to make analogous errors in writing an essay, speaking, or other discourse processing tasks. In fact, such problems carry over into relatively routine tasks, such as repeating sequences of heard material, reading aloud, or even copying a text.

Also, in taking dictation, word order is sometimes adjusted in surprisingly creative and ungrammatical ways. Lexical items are changed radically. For example, in one study at UCLA a passage on "brain cells" was rendered in an almost coherent way by one non-native speaker of English as a text on "brand sales." Almost everything in the text was changed. Superficially, however, there was some phonetic resemblance between what had been dictated and what was written down. Less dramatic transformations of the same sort are commonly observed in dictation protocols (cf. Oller, 1979, pp. 283–85, for several examples).

From the empirical studies of dictation as well as cloze procedure and other integrative tasks, it became obvious that the objective of diagnostic specificity of discrete-point items could be fully achieved in the richer context of an integrative task (e.g., see Anderson, 1971; Cziko; Oller, 1979; Chavez-Oller et al.; Fouly and Cziko; Laesch and van Kleeck), or better, a variety of different tasks focussing on common elements of grammatical structure or skill. However, on this point the research has largely been ignored and as recently as 1983, Spolsky (pp. 40–41) persists in the view that discrete-point items have some special merit as diagnostic tools.

4.4. The Antithesis: The Integrative Approach

In fact, the use of integrative tests pre-dated the taxonomical concern with analysis that came to be the predominant theme in the 1960s. Long before that, Otto Jespersen and others had advocated more holistic, integrated approaches to language instruction. Jespersen even anticipated the pragmatic emphasis on episodic organization. However, the analytical methods of the structural linguistics of Bloomfield, Harris, and their followers prevailed. That influence was felt not only in the foreign language curriculum, but also in the first language reading curriculum, and throughout the language arts.

While the items of discrete-point tests were supposed to be focussed on one single element of one skill or component of grammar (according to Lado's theory and owing largely to Bloomfieldian thinking), integrative tests might require the use of many elements, several components, and several skills more or less simultaneously (an approach that owed everything to the intuitive genius of teachers who could only be regarded as stubborn by the prevailing academic luminaries). Integrative tests, however, are the only kind that truly resemble normal, authentic, language use. They are the only kind that have at least the potential for episodic organization as defined above.

Examples of integrative tests experimented with in the 1960s and 1970s included taking dictation (Valette, 1964), writing short or long essays (Briere), answering questions orally (Upshur, 1967, 1969a,b), telling a story (Politzer et al.), giving a speech, participating in a conversation or oral interview (ETS, 1970), reading aloud (Kolers), answering questions about a text (Politzer et al.), repeating sequences from a text or narrative (also known as "elicited imitation"; Baratz; Politzer et al.; Swain et al.), translating from first to second language or the reverse ("elicited translation"; Swain et al.), etc. One of the integrative tasks experimented with in the late 1960s and early 1970s was cloze procedure—a method invented by Wilson Taylor for measuring readability of texts. It involves omitting words from a written (or possibly oral text) and requiring the examinee to replace the missing items (Darnell; Anderson; Oller and Conrad; Oller, 1973a).

As empirical research began to accumulate in the 1970s and into the 1980s, it became clear that there were practical as well as theoretical differences between integrative and discrete-point tests. Integrative tests were apparently measuring some traits and abilities of language users that discrete-point tests could not get at. Still, even into the 1970s there were some, Earl Rand of UCLA, for instance, who insisted that discrete-point methods were either better or at worst equivalent to integrative tests. But, if one had examined closely the empirical results, it would have become clear that greater reliability and validity generally accrued to tests falling more toward the integrative end of the spectrum. While tests of particular phonemic contrasts, inflectional morphemes, or syntactic rules, might generate reliabilities in the range of .6 to .7 (e.g., Evola et al.), tests of a more integrative character yielded reliabilities in the .8 to .9 range (Oller, 1972; Oller and Nagato; Scott, 1979; Savignon, 1982; Cziko, 1978, 1982).

It seemed to many, therefore, toward the end of the 1970s that integrative testing had prevailed over discrete-point approaches. However, this conclusion may have been premature. In the context of normal language processing, any given discrete point may be singled out for special scrutiny. On the other hand, it would become obvious that discrete points in the absence of the dynamic tensional context of discourse are like the dimensionless points of a line. Without any way to define the line, they are pure fictions. In context, notions of discrete elements of language structure or skill are valuable theoretical constructs. Without context, they are undefinable.

4.5. A New Synthesis: Pragmatic Testing

Out of this controversy, therefore, emerged a distinction of a different sort. While the discrete-point/integrative dichotomy was based on superficial aspects of test items, domains of structure, and modalities of processing, it became increasingly clear that the distinction had been incompletely drawn. Carroll (1961), Rand (1976), and Farhady (1983a) all noted that there never was a truly categorical difference between discrete-point and integrative test items. The difference was merely one of degree. The dichotomy formed a continuum whose end-points were fully distinct only in theory. In practice, there could be no completely discrete-point items anymore than there can be points or lines in the space/time continuum of physics apart from some object or trajectory to define them. In actual experience all test items are more or less integrative in character.

Normal language use always involves meaning beyond the theoretically distinguishable (discrete) elements of surface forms. There is a link with persons, places, things, events, and relations in experience. However, if this meaning aspect beyond surface form is admitted, no test item can ever fully meet the demands of discrete-point theory. It may be worth mentioning that semantics and pragmatics were notably absent from discussions of discrete-point items, probably because meaning as such can never be a truly discrete-point affair. It cannot be since meaning spills over into the whole continuum of experience.

Another insurmountable difficulty for discrete-point theory was that language use occurs in real time and is constrained thereby. Time and meaning, respectively, therefore came to be recognized as pragmatic-naturalness constraints that led to identification of a certain subclass of integrative tests that came to be known as pragmatic (Oller, 1973a, 1979; Cohen; Savignon, 1983). This subclass, it turned out, was entirely distinct from discrete-point tests. In fact, the pragmatic-naturalness criteria would eliminate any strictly discrete-point item as unnatural. It could be argued that such items do not really involve normal language use any more than the recitation of a list of numbers or parroting of numerical operations constitutes mathematical reasoning.

In addition, many tests that are thoroughly integrative in character fail to meet the pragmatic-naturalness criteria. For instance, a proofreading test explored by Barrett was integrative but failed the meaning criterion. It involved the omission of morphologically redundant elements (e.g., plural markers, tense indicators, articles, prepositions, verb particles) from prose and required the restoration of these elements by examinees. A peculiarity of the task was that fluent readers had to attend so much to surface form in order to find the missing elements that they failed to process the meaning of the text and after performing the task could not tell what it was about. On the other hand, examinees who did concentrate on the meaning would invariably get low scores. These results are consistent with the frequent observation by proofreaders that plying their trade slows down their reading.

In fact, to ensure accuracy, they often resort to rather unusual methods of checking surface forms such as reading the text backwards, or following it word-for-word while someone else reads aloud, and the like. These extreme measures are useful because proofreading requires a somewhat unnatural attention to surface form, and good readers often supply much information that is not in fact in the surface forms at all (cf. references under Goodman; Smith).

Another procedure that is integrative but fails the time requirement is the sort of multiple-choice cloze test where a list of many (say, 50 or more) words are given and must be re-inserted, one by one, into a text with blanks. This task is highly integrative but involves looking back and forth between the list and the text, while constantly re-reading the list and to some extent the text as well. Such a task may be more like solving a crossword puzzle than normal discourse processing. The frequent interruptions in looking back and forth between text and list and the time lapses while reading the list make it doubtful that such a task is pragmatically viable. The longer the list of possible words, the less the task resembles normal discourse processing.

Yet to be fully appreciated by theoreticians and practitioners is that all the goals of discrete-point items, e.g., diagnosis, focus, isolation, can be better achieved in the full rich context of one or more pragmatic tests. Laesch and van Kleeck have shown that cloze procedure provides a more accurate prediction of school achievement (as measured by the *California Tests of Basic Skills*) than a more surface-oriented and more discrete-point measure such as the *Language Assessment Scales* (DeAvila and Duncan). Laesch and van Kleeck also showed that cloze scores provide a basis for distinguishing levels of proficiency (cf. Anderson, 1971) along the lines of Cummins' threshold hypothesis. Their research, together with that of Chavez-Oller et al., only begins to scratch the surface of the diagnostic potential of this rich pragmatic procedure.

Nevertheless, certain aspects of developing language proficiency in bilinguals cannot possibly be observed with discrete-point items. Following Anderson's somewhat arbitrary distinctions among reading levels ("independent," "instructional," and "frustrational"), Laesch and van Kleeck were apparently able to clearly distinguish the types of errors common to cloze items made by subjects at each of these levels. Students operating at the frustrational level tended to make errors involving short-range syntactic or morphological constraints, while students at the higher levels tended to make a higher proportion of errors involving longer-range semantic and pragmatic constraints. If this finding can be replicated with larger numbers of subjects (they only had 28 bilingual third graders in their study), it will provide additional empirical support for the claim that pragmatic procedures yield richer and more specific sorts of diagnosis than discrete-point (non-contextualized, isolated) items ever could. Further, the applicability of cloze procedure in one adaptation or another across the full spectrum of learners from preschool through college is well documented. In a 1978 publication, for example, Streiff demonstrated the applicability of oral cloze tests with preschoolers.

In addition to greater diagnostic potential, pragmatic tests also afford certain psychometric advantages that are apparently missing in discrete-point tests. Cziko (1982) and Fouly and Cziko showed that dictation tasks could be arranged in 14 segments of increasing difficulty so as to form a Guttman scale. One of the advantages of such a scale is that it allows discrimination across a wide range of subject abilities and provides a useful basis for determining levels of proficiency in relation to a range of fairly explicit criteria of performance. They also showed that the scoring of dictation could be simplified effectively by counting each segment given between pauses as an item and scoring it as incorrect if any element in the segment was not reproduced verbatim (repeated-spelling errors not counted). By their method, instead of scoring every single word, only the 14 separate segments of their test were scored. The scalability of all 14 items was judged to be quite acceptable and the overall reliability and validity of the test within acceptable limits (the Guttman odd-even split-half reliability reported was .85). Researchers at Resource Development Institute in Austin, Texas, incidentally, had demonstrated similar scalability properties for all eight of the pragmatic tasks used to calibrate the language question on the 1980 U.S. Census (see Scott).

4.6. Mastery, Criterion-Referenced, and Edumetric Tests

As distinct from tests that try to spread individuals over some normative scale that compares an individual with some reference group, mastery (Valette, 1969), criterion-referenced (Block; Ebel), and edumetric (Cziko, 1982, 1983b; Fouly and Cziko) tests have been proposed. These tests all shift emphasis from comparisons across individuals or groups to some definable curricular or experiential goal. One of the objectives of this shift is to get the teacher (and the school system in effect) to share responsibility for the success or failure of the student. Whereas "psychometric" testing focuses on the performance of the individual compared to others or to some norm (defined in terms of group performance), "edumetric" testing focuses on the curricular task or objective itself.

As early as 1969, Valette was recommending such a shift to foreign language teachers. She contended that teaching should aim for the mastery of certain communication tasks/skills, e.g., getting FL students to the point where they can order a meal in a restaurant or ask directions to a certain location.[9] The individual's ability to perform the task could be regarded as the criterion against which performance was to be judged. In this way, teaching and testing for mastery and criterion-referenced testing are at least similar if not identical.

A criterion could be interpreted in terms of some quantitative mark. As Valette admitted, the teacher would eventually have to define a score which would be arbitrarily judged to represent mastery. Such a determination is necessary if a decision is to be made about who passes to the next level of study and who does not. If the student has mastered all but five tasks out of a hundred, this might arbitrarily be determined as a passing performance, or perhaps a mark as low as 85% would be acceptable. Practical exigencies demand some such decision. But, as soon as that decision is made, an implicit distinction between individuals who have achieved mastery and those who have not is made explicit. Again, an inevitable element of psychometric comparison (dichotomous in this case; pass versus fail) is reintroduced. There is simply no way to remove the risk of failure from a genuine educational enterprise.

Regardless how the case is argued, the responsibility of teachers for success or failure of their students cannot eliminate the fact that language acquisition is inevitably a community-oriented affair. There cannot be a definition of target language mastery that does not imply a community that defines uses of the target language as normal, authentic, acceptable, grammatical, etc. (see Bachman and Savignon). If I study a foreign language, I automatically submit myself in some sense to the judgmental scrutiny of the foreign language community, and this is tantamount to admitting the validity of criteria of evaluation that in some manner relate to community norms.

None of this, of course, denies the valid outcome of the discussion of mastery, criterion-referenced, or edumetric testing. As Cazden (1985) has eloquently insisted, teachers must either become advocates in some sense for their students, or they will be seen as adversaries. Where the student is genuinely at risk of failure, there can be no neutral ground for a teacher who cares about the student.

5. Teacher-Made and Standardized Tests

What tests should the elementary-school foreign language teacher use? A number of explicit recommendations need to be made here. It is expected that teachers-in-training and practitioners will consult more detailed references with respect to the particular procedures they choose to employ. For example, Cohen, Savignon (1983), and Swain and Lapkin give very readable advice about some of the pragmatic testing procedures recommended here. Somewhat more detail and theoretical depth will be found in Oller (1979). Technical discussions of statistical procedures and the like, developed by Hatch and Farhady, Henning, and, in more readable form, by Brown (1988a) will be useful to anyone who wants to join the fray.[10]

5.1. Valid Teaching as Prerequisite to Valid Testing

Teachers should do whatever lobbying or politicking is necessary to ensure that every FL curriculum is solidly grounded in episodically organized materials and activities that are interesting, relevant, and significant to their students. Personally, I see no more hope today for the discrete-point curriculum than Simon Belasco did in 1969. As he noted, indeed we must somehow teach the 50,000 points of the old discrete-point curriculum, or at least a substantial number of them, but the only realistic way to accomplish such an objective is through the dynamic and rich context of episodically organized materials. Otherwise, we will end up failing just as so many language teachers and students continue to do even today (cf. Valette's indictment of the profession in 1969; or the remarks of Inman as cited by Gray et al.; or the appraisal of Gray et al. themselves).

As Wilga Rivers noted in a recent talk to the Japan Association of Language Teachers in Tokyo (also citing Belasco, 1969), mouthing or otherwise manipulating isolated bits and pieces of language never has and never will add up to anything very close to native-like language proficiency. For recommendations along the lines of a more pragmatic curriculum, see Richard-Amato and her references.

5.2. Valid Testing Grounded in Theory

Given a pragmatically sound curriculum, teachers may confidently employ tried and proven methods of classroom test development that conform to the pragmatic-naturalness constraints. The task must be within the reach of the students in terms of the pragmatic linking of discourse to experience (it must be meaningful), and it must occur in real time in a way that conforms, more or less, to the usual rhythm of that discourse activity.

For instance, dictating a list of spelling words is decidedly not a pragmatic testing activity. Neither does filling in blanks in isolated, disjointed sentences constitute a cloze test (even Wilson Taylor, inventor of the latter procedure, took note of this; 1953, p. 417, see his section titled "Not a Sentence-Completion Test"). For more on ways to devise pragmatically viable dictation tasks, cloze tests, oral interviews, essays, and the like, see Oller (1979); Cohen; Fouly and Cziko; and Savignon (1983). No one ever claimed that every imaginable dictation, cloze test, or any other pragmatic procedure is automatically valid in the abstract (though Klein-Braley, pp. 219ff, insists that similar claims were made; as does Porter, pp. 63f).

Nevertheless, it is expected that if the deep underlying discourse basis for any such test is authentic, well structured and motivated, and appropriate to the level and experience of the students, there is every reason to suppose that such a test will be valid. Failing these requirements, and to just such a degree, there is every reason to suppose that it will not be. These expectations are founded not in statistical research on particular tests, though that research generally bears out the predictions. Rather, the claim for the general validity of pragmatic testing is grounded in a powerful and general theory of semiotics, namely the theory that formed the basis for classic pragmatism (cf. Oller, 1989a). The basis of the argument is not statistical in character though it has certain statistical consequences.

5.3. A Few Actual Testing Procedures Examined

It may be useful to examine a few of the procedures that have been used in elementary school foreign language evaluations or experimental studies, or which are being prepared for such use. In particular, the *MLA Cooperative Tests* (for French and Spanish) have been used by Gray et al.; and (for Spanish) by Snow et al. Self-assessments of language skills were also obtained in both those studies, enabling some tentative observations about the likely validity of such techniques in general. In addition, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is in the process of developing the *FLES Test: Spanish*, and a collaborative venture of CAL and UCLA, the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR) is developing the *CLEAR Oral Proficiency Exam* (*COPE*). In addition to considering these procedures, a few comments must be made in reference to the much discussed *ACTFL Guidelines*, which have in some measure served as the model for the development of *COPE*. Finally, the tests and procedures discussed by Swain and Lapkin (1982) and Cummins (1984) in regard to Canadian immersion programs are considered.

The MLA Tests. Gray et al. used the *MLA Cooperative Tests* for French and Spanish in their study of FLES, partial immersion, and immersion programs, in a carefully selected sample of 15 U.S. elementary schools. They chose the MLA tests because there were no other tests that covered the full range of skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). They also noted candidly that there had been some question as to appropriateness of the tests for use at the elementary level. In defense of their use, Gray and Campbell (1982), however, had found that younger students were able to complete the tasks, though Gray et al. noted that children below grade 5 did have some trouble in understanding the directions as well as the answer-sheet-marking procedure.

Snow et al. tested slightly more advanced students (grades 6–11), all of whom had experienced seven years of immersion (from K–6), but they, too, noted the imperfect fit of the MLA tests. They wrote: "there are no test instruments designed specifically for students with such an intensive elementary foreign language experience" (p. 186). Of course, we should note that with the CAL tests in development, we are hopeful this situation is being remedied.

The MLA tests contain four parts. The first, aimed at listening skills, is a series of 45 questions (on audio-tape) requiring a choice of either a picture or phrase in the test booklet. The second, aimed at speaking ability, 82 items, includes elicited imitation of words, reading aloud, and story-telling. The third, reading, consists of 50 multiple-choice items. Some of the reading items are comprehension questions cued by short passages, and others require students to fill in the blank in a sentence. The fourth part, writing, contains 100 items for which students must supply grammatical elements or make corrections and fill out a brief dialogue. These tasks clearly were based on some of the best thinking of the 1960s and still have much to recommend them.

Therefore, perhaps it should not be surprising that results from the MLA tests seemed to allow meaningful comparisons between the performance of elementary-school children and norms obtained from high school students in 1963. Data on the same tests are also available for college FL majors near graduation (Carroll, 1967). Gray et al. were duly cautious in interpreting comparisons between elementary and high school students, but their optimism concerning the observed impact of elementary school programs seems justified.

The MLA tests were also used for similar comparisons among 6th, 7th, 9th, and 11th grade students, with apparently equal validity, though with a different purpose in mind, by Snow et al. Their purpose was to study language retention/loss after an intensive elementary school foreign language experience of 7 years' duration (K–6).

If these studies show anything about language tests at all, it is that such tests have considerable versatility as regards distinct age groups. However, I believe Gray et al. were correct in criticizing the somewhat traditional emphasis of the MLA tests on surface features of the languages in question. Many of the items in those tests are weak with reference to episodic organization, understandable when the prevailing theoretical paradigm was discrete-point in orientation.

Gray et al. observe: "it was speculated that the speaking subtest assessed surface facility of the language rather than communicative competence" (p. 30). In their concluding remarks they strengthen their position:

> It is certainly the case that the MLA tests for French and Spanish used in the present study are not adequate to provide appropriate and precise data regarding diverse aspects of language proficiency. It is evident that immediate attention needs to be given to the development of a variety of testing instruments to assess communicative competence, as well as control over a variety of more traditional "school based" abilities (pp. 53–54).

Perhaps these remarks were written with a view toward the development of the *FLES Test* and more specifically the *COPE*.

In spite of acknowledged weaknesses, however, the MLA tests as applied to elementary school foreign language programs produced some meaningful comparisons between FLES programs, partial immersion, and immersion programs. In fact, even when compared with high school norms, all three groups of elementary students performed remarkably well. A total of 382 elementary-school students were tested; the largest group of four-years-plus immersion students ever studied in the U.S. (according to Gray et al., pp. 14–15).

In the full range of skills, the elementary students tested outperformed from 9% to 99% of the high school students in the 1963 norming population for the MLA tests. As might be expected, the younger students were relatively weaker in reading and writing skills and stronger in speaking and listening.[11] For example, the mean scores on the speaking portions of the MLA Cooperative Tests for three different subsamples in French and Spanish immersion and partial immersion programs (ranging from grades 4–8 and having studied the target language for a minimum of four years and a maximum of seven) fell at the 99th percentile of the original high school group. Even students from more traditional FLES programs tended to fall somewhere near the 20th percentile for high school FL students in listening, reading, and writing, and at about the

50th percentile for speaking. Immersion and partial immersion students did even better.

These results overall might be interpreted in two ways: (1) perhaps the 15 innovative immersion, partial immersion, and traditional FLES programs had a number of overachievers, or, (2) perhaps the high school FL programs were weak in some respects. The first interpretation receives some advantage from the fact that across the board, in listening, reading, and writing, elementary-school students compared favorably with high school norms. However, the second alternative is more in tune with the dismal appraisals of U.S. FL education on the whole by several different groups of expert reviewers.

Self-Assessment. From time to time considerable hope has been held out for self-evaluations of FL proficiency or of related matters such as the extensiveness of language use in the home and community, attitudes of various sorts, and motivations. On the other hand, reviews of the empirical evidence on self-assessments have not been entirely encouraging. For a selective survey of some of the relevant research, see Oller and Perkins (1978, pp.103–27). Summing up the findings considered there, self-reports on proficiency tend to produce concurrent validity in about the .4 to .6 range with some consistency. However, the substantially higher concurrent validity statistics of more objective testing are rarely achieved.

John Clark (1981) has proposed a more elaborate self-rating procedure based on explicit descriptions of specific language tasks. Gardner (1985), for one, holds out high hopes for this approach. Subjects are asked to evaluate their ability to perform a given task on a four-point scale: "not at all," "with great difficulty," "with some difficulty," "quite easily." Since tasks range from such things as counting to ten to describing the check and balance system provided for in the U.S. Constitution, they can be ranked from less to more difficult along the lines of a Guttman scale. The number of tasks a person is capable of doing will then tend to indicate that person's proficiency level. Perhaps this approach holds out more promise than less focussed self-evaluations.

Research with elementary school foreign language students specifically is somewhat mixed. While there is some evidence in Gray et al. that students of higher proficiency levels are better able to assess and rate their own skills, a dramatic difference between low-proficiency French FLES students (83 students, though only 11 completed the speaking test) and higher proficiency immersion students (33 students, except for the speaking test, where it was 11) was not replicated with the Spanish FLES, partial immersion, and immersion students.

While there was a tendency for correlations to be higher in the Spanish subjects as they achieved higher levels of proficiency, the tendency was not so dramatic as in the case of French programs. Sixteen correlations (a square matrix relating the four self-ratings with the four MLA subtest scores) yielded only one significant correlation (between the MLA listening score and self-rating of listening ability) for the relatively lower FLES students, while a similar matrix for more proficient French immersion students yielded 12 significant correlations in the field of 16 (ranging from .53 to .71, and thus accounting for a variance overlap between about 25% and 50% for self-ratings and the MLA tests).

With Spanish subjects (about 263 students, varying on the basis of completeness of questionnaire or MLA test data), the contrast was not so clear. For Spanish FLES subjects no statistically reliable correlations were observed in the entire matrix of 16 possibilities; for partial immersion Spanish students 4 out of 16 correlations were significant (though none above .32, indicating about a maximum of about 10% variance overlap); and for Spanish immersion subjects 6 of 16 were significant (though none was greater than .30).

In the case of the Spanish programs, Gray et al. note that correlations tend to slur over some of the important differences among programs examined—for instance, there was a rather large discrepancy between two of the immersion programs (p. 24). Still, no one would probably want to make a case in favor of looking at self-ratings of proficiency in lieu of a more objective testing approach (and Gray et al. do not suggest this).

Snow et al. also elicited self-assessments for the 38 cases in their study (a much smaller sample size) but here even though students were all beneficiaries of 7 years of Spanish immersion, and thus supposedly at the higher end of the spectrum in FL proficiency, correlations with other measures were not apparently significant. The only significant relation that emerged (pp. 193–94), as determined by dichotomized scores on a factor involving questions from a self-report questionnaire, was with self-ratings of academic achievement.[12] The authors report that "there was no significant relation between integrative motivation, MLA retention, language use, or self-assessment" (p. 195).

New Tests for Elementary School Language Programs. In this section we look specifically at two newly constructed tests designed especially for use in FLES or immersion programs at the elementary level, namely, the *FLES Test (Spanish): A Test for Students in Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools Programs* (Thompson and Richardson) and the *CLEAR Oral Proficiency Exam (COPE): Spanish Version* (CLEAR). Both tests require description and are new enough that reliability and validity data are not yet available.[13] Therefore, only general comments are possible. However, since *COPE* in particular has been much influenced by the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*, some of the discussion in connection with the *Guidelines* can be drawn into play.

The *FLES Test (Spanish)* (henceforth, *FTS*) is a machine-scorable test aimed at listening and reading skills. It takes an hour to administer. There are 20 listening comprehension items followed by 53 items aimed at one aspect or another of reading comprehension.

The first 14 questions are of the yes/no type and the last 6 in the listening section are multiple-choice (three alternative) completion questions. In the first 14 items, statements are presented which either do or do not conform to an accompanying picture in the test booklet, e.g., "Mike lives on Central Avenue," "Mary is sad." The last 6 items require students to look at a picture of a fictitious character from Mars and determine first how many hands, eyes, or ears he has, and then whether he has three legs, noses, or arms, two eyes, ears, or legs, and one ear, leg, or mouth. Stems for the 20 listening comprehension items are all presented by the teacher. In each case, sufficient information to answer the items is provided in pictures supplied in the test booklet.

In the second part of the test, items 21–73 are aimed at reading comprehension. Items 21–23 concern time telling and require a choice of possible responses to tell the time as displayed on a grandfather clock, a wrist-watch, and a digital alarm clock. The question for these items is the same: "What time is it?" (in Spanish, of course).

Items 24–29 consist of statements about family relations where the student must fill in blanks in statements describing relations that are represented in labelled pictures. Items 30–39 are multiple-choice questions concerning common foods and their colors, e.g., "milk," "white," "corn-on-the-cob," "yellow." Again the necessary information is provided pictorially. In this case each picture goes with a pair of items.

Items 40–48 concern a pictured classroom and a description of the activities going on in it. These items are a mini-cloze test of the multiple-choice type. Here a certain amount of episodic organization is introduced as there are inferred antecedents and consequents for pictured activities, e.g., a girl is taking out materials to write with, a boy is raising his hand to ask a question. Presumably a consequent of the girl's taking out her writing things is that she is going to write something, and an antecedent that she had in mind something to write, or was given an assignment to do so. A boy is raising his hand in order to be recognized, presumably to ask a question (consequent) which he had in mind before raising his hand (antecedent), etc. Though the context is a fairly simple one, as in the case of all ordinary experience, it consists of a rich supply of propositionally complex interrelationships.

Items 49–57 are also episodically determined. This time a short paragraph tells about Mrs. Mendoza on a shopping spree. She buys several items. The problem for each item that follows is whether or not she bought the item pictured. The student must simply indicate "yes" or "no" for each one.

Items 58–63 concern knowledge of days of the week, months of the year, and numbers corresponding to dates. Certain holidays are also suggested and vocabulary pertaining to birthdays and the like. The pictured material for these items consists of pages from a calendar with printed notations indicating special days, such as Carlos's birthday and Columbus Day. Questions require either a "yes/no" response or the name of a month, day of the week, the date, or the name of a holiday.

Items 64–67 concern the weather and seasons. Two scenes are pictured, and students must determine choices in response to questions about whether it is hot or cold, winter or summer, and the like.

Items 68–73 involve common questions and answers asking for personal information. Here, since the answers are in a multiple-choice format, the student is told merely to select the one of three that is appropriate to the question in each case. For instance, if the question asks for a name, the student must select the response that gives one rather than telling about a sibling, or that he/she speaks Spanish, and so forth.

The *FTS* is a promising test. It shows some sensitivity to current theory and research, e.g., work supporting the use of multiple-choice cloze items (e.g., Hale et al.), theory supporting the simplicity of yes/no questions, scalability of items, etc. It also seems to conform nicely to the scope of traditional FLES programs as described in recent literature. Rhodes and Oxford, for example, describe traditional FLES programs as centering "around greetings, colors, numbers, food, days of the week, etc., and conversation focuses on topics children are familiar with, e.g., family, pets, school" (p. 54). Or, to take another source, as Glisan and Phillips describe the vocabulary units for immersion programs, they include "common plants, trees, flowers"; "nutrition, food groups"; "basic math functions" (counting, time-telling, calendars, and the like, presumably); and "storytelling." (Of course, unlike grocery lists, such curriculum guidelines can never be completed and are never fully explicit.)

Even seemingly negative aspects of the test are probably to be counted in its favor. For instance, it is undesirable generally for many of the items to be answerable correctly by chance, but on the *FTS* the probability of guessing items correctly is 50% for 25 items and 33% for the remaining 48. On the other hand, it is imperative with children in the early grades to keep things simple, and the yes/no format of the first 14 questions helps accomplish this. It facilitates the process of teaching children how to mark a machine-scored answer-sheet. Also, the adjustment to three alternatives helps alleviate the guessing factor for 48 of the remaining items, though it would be possible, perhaps, to go on up to five alternatives to reduce the guessing factor still further in the more difficult of those items.

The ordering of questions from easy to more difficult can possibly be improved some after item statistics (especially item facility and discrimination) are accumulated. For instance, item 62 asks how many days there are in October and the choices are (A) 29, (B) 30, and (C) 31. Since there is a calendar page showing the month of October (Octubre) with its 31 days immediately to the right of the question, it seems entirely possible that some students will guess the correct answer without processing the question in Spanish at all. But even this is not a major flaw since there should be some items that weaker students can understand by such scaffolding processes (i.e., by relying on visual cues and previous knowledge). In fact, all representations, if Peirce was correct, are understood only in terms of other representations in a precisely analogous fashion. The only question left then is whether such an easy item should appear so late in the test and with others that might be substantially more difficult.

In favor of the *FTS* we may note its breadth of coverage of tasks, vocabulary, and forms commonly described as objectives in FLES programs. It employs a reasonable balance of descriptive and narrative tasks and incorporates substantial episodic organization within some sequences of items. As to the rest it would be difficult to argue against their utility in relation to basic linguistic skills and common experience. The test also shows some substantial influence from the growing body of research on language testing. It can be expected to have a salubrious effect on traditional FLES curriculum and teaching and may perhaps draw some FLEX programs toward a higher level of adequacy.

The anticipated tendency to teach only the very items of the test could be avoided in part by producing multiple forms. Perhaps multiple forms with open-ended items might also be devised, rather than only machine-scorable multiple-choice items, in order to encourage teachers (who will, as experience shows, inevitably teach the test items) to focus on holistic communicative tasks and meaningful experiential contexts rather than on specific multiple-choice items.

We come now to *COPE*, the *CLEAR Oral Proficiency Exam: Spanish Version*. Presumably there are plans to develop versions for other languages. The manual, titled *Instructions for Using the CLEAR Oral Proficiency Exam*, tells us that the procedure is designed to measure "a language learner's ability to understand, speak, and be understood by others in Spanish" and that "it is focussed on *oral communication ability* considered apart from ability to read or write in the language" (their emphasis). Further, it is targeted "for 5th and 6th graders who have been studying in a total or partial immersion program" (p. 1).

The procedure is obviously influenced in many respects by the *ACTFL Provisional Guidelines* (1982) and the *ACTFL Guidelines* (1985) and some of the attendant discussion. The *ACTFL Guidelines*, actually descriptors of proficiency levels in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, respectively, were adapted from the *Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Language Skill Descriptions: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing* (Adams et al., 1984, as cited by Lowe; see his references).

COPE, however, narrows the field of interest to oral skills which are defined in terms of four nine-point scales which fit in fine print horizontally on a single legal-sized sheet of paper. The scales are labelled "Comprehension," "Fluency," "Vocabulary," and "Grammar." In the manual they are defined as follows:

> *Comprehension*—refers to the ability to understand the spoken language: in a range of situations, including formal, instructional situations (in which there are few contextual cues to meaning) and informal conversational situations;[14] at a normal rate of speech, without requiring the speaker to adjust the pace of speech, and, without requiring repetitions.
>
> *Fluency*—refers to the rhythm and pacing of the speech produced by the student, including: the degree to which speech is produced smoothly without hesitation and without the need to pause to search for vocabulary or expressions.
>
> *Vocabulary*—refers to the student's knowledge of the words and expressions he/she needs to communicate, including: the range or breadth of vocabulary used appropriately and the use of idiomatic words and phrases.
>
> *Grammar*—refers to the accuracy of the speech used by the students in terms of word formation and sentence structure, including: the frequency of grammatical errors; the degree to which they interfere with a listener's ability to understand, and the range of grammatical structures used by the student (CAL, pp. 3–4).

Raters are admonished not to let the rating on one scale influence any of the others. "Each should stand alone" (p. 5). This requirement is difficult to achieve. Probably it is impossible for raters not to be influenced somewhat by a kind of spill-over from one scale to the next (cf. Yorozuya and Oller). Still, the admonition is certainly well advised, and the four scales included on the rating sheet would be agreed to by most researchers.

The levels on each scale are designated Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced, each of which is further refined into three subcategories—roughly low, mid, high. Associated with each of the nine points (levels) on each scale is a descriptor: for instance, the lowest point on the comprehension scale carries the descriptor "Recognizes a few familiar questions and commands" while the highest point on the same scale is described by the phrase "Has no difficulty in conversation or in academic talk." The middle of the same scale is defined more elaborately: "Comprehension problems seldom evident on everyday topics. Carries out commands without prompting. May show some difficulty on unfamiliar topics."

Of course, any list of descriptors can provide no more than a rough notion of an idealized level of proficiency. As Lowe suggests, the definitions or descriptors may become more idealized as raters gain experience in working with a scale. Or, for some raters they might tend to go in the other direction, toward increasingly specific criteria of performance. Or, both may happen simultaneously. In any case, however, it is not possible to climb up to an idealization without starting somewhere with our feet on the ground, i.e., in a specific context or range of contexts. As Higgs and Clifford argued, a testing procedure must to some extent involve specific performances that elicit or engage a level of proficiency. They contend that both content and context must be involved, therefore, in the very definition of proficiency itself.

Bachman and Savignon have insisted that "communicative language proficiency must be defined independently of [content and context] factors" (p. 385). More particularly, they object on the basis of previous research (Bachman and Palmer) that a given testing method may sometimes produce more variability than proficiency as measured by other methods.

For instance, in their 1981 study of the *FSI Oral Interview*, translation of a first-language text (read-by-subject) into a second language (spoken-by-subject) and target language (read-by-subject) to native (written-by-subject), and self-ratings of target-language speaking and reading ability correlated more strongly with factors defined purely by the methods than they did with speaking and reading factors defined in part by additional tests of those abilities (an FSI-type interview in the foreign language and an interview in the native language concerning passages read in the target language).

COPE is not exempt from such considerations. In fact, its strongest assets may at once be its greatest liabilities. As a method, *COPE* is distinguished from other oral interview procedures in three ways: (1) it always involves a pair of interlocutors who are evaluated during the same session; (2) the rater, probably the elementary-school language teacher, serves as moderator and orchestrator rather than as direct participant in the dialogues; and (3) the test requires role-playing in an imaginary situation. A fourth point that is emphasized by its creators is that "the test is designed to assess both academic and social language" (CAL, p. 1).

The test context itself is unique in several ways: the role-play situation always involves one student playing host and another playing the part of a Mexican visitor. Some will probably want to suggest immediately that the guest might sometimes be a Cuban, Puerto Rican, Nicaraguan, Spaniard, Argentine, etc., but apart from such quibbling, the situation itself is not entirely unlikely. Further, it seems reasonably balanced between the two players in terms of language requirements. The host, it would seem, is under no more social obligation to be accommodating to the visitor than the guest is to help establish common ground by asking the right questions, etc., and reciprocating with volunteered information, etc.

The tester first instructs all the students to be tested concerning the nature of the procedure. This initial phase is conducted in English. Skipping details, students are reassured that the procedure will not affect their grades and that the objective is merely to see how well they understand and speak Spanish. They are told that pairs are to be selected and that they will have conversations as directed by the teacher.

The teacher, according to the manual, is instructed to select pairs so that they will be more or less equally matched. This may be difficult to do, and one can easily imagine situations in which the selection of participants might become the predominant issue in a given pairing. But, let us assume that this problem can be overcome in such cases by empathy and creative adjustments.

From there each paired interview proceeds first with greetings; elicitation of information for the rating sheet (name, grade, school, location, rater's name, date); role assignment (inviting subjects to indicate their own preferences, with the rater as arbiter, presumably, if both should prefer the same role); general instructions concerning the interview (this time in Spanish); and then the interview proper.

The interview itself is guided by 17 contexts defined on index cards, with which the interviewer is supposed to be thoroughly familiar beforehand. Skipping over some, situational problems range from introductions to lunch in the cafeteria, checking out a book at the library, planning a trip, riding a bus to school, going to a movie, social life and styles in Mexico and the U.S., going to a party, a nutrition experiment with rats in a science class, telling about an auto accident, a fight on the playground, school rules in the U.S. and Mexico, and the use of equipment commonly found in a science lab.

For three of the topics, support is provided in the form of a picture on an index card: (1) there is a time line with the hours 6 am, 12 noon, 6 pm, and 12 midnight singled out for reference to a conversation about a typical day at school, home, or somewhere else (Dialogue 4); (2) a map of the U.S. to use in the segment about planning a trip (Dialogue 7); and (3) a picture of objects that might be found in a science lab (Dialogue 17).

Of course, no pair of students would be asked to do all 17 tasks. This would be impossible in the 20 minutes allotted each pair of students (CAL, p. 6). The tasks, as described on the cards, are arranged from easiest to hardest (in theory, at least) so that the tester, after a warm-up on the first three contexts might skip to a more advanced level. The teacher is told in the manual to "begin with card #1. *Continue with core cards #2, #3, #5, #7, #15, and #17*" (their emphasis, p. 7). However, raters are told, "If at any time students display unusual difficulty, do not progress to higher level cards, but do one or two supplementary dialogue cards at that level or the level below in order to fine-tune the rating" (p. 7). I take this to mean that raters have considerable latitude in deciding which tasks pairs of students should attempt.

To give a better idea of the specifics, so that we may try to see things from the point of view of a person being tested, after roles have been assigned and all preliminaries are out of the way, students are told in Spanish: "Now I am going to give you instructions for a few brief dialogues. You may speak as much as you want, and you may imagine whatever you want in order to answer the questions. When your partner asks you something, you should answer" (p. 6; my translations unless otherwise indicated).

Then, the tester moves immediately into the specific instructions for Dialogue 1, "Introductions." Both students are told in Spanish: "Today is Monday, and the Mexican student has just arrived to visit the school. You introduce yourselves." Then, the tester addresses the American: "Welcome your Mexican visitor. Tell him (or her, as appropriate) your name, age, grade in school, and ask him (her) for the same information." Then, the tester is instructed to address the Mexican visitor: "Tell him (her) about what you like to do, your favorite sports, and ask him (her) about the same things."

To give an idea of how complexity increases, consider the instructions for Dialogue 5. Here both students are instructed: "Today you will go to the library. The Mexican visitor wants to know how to use the library." Then, to the Mexican guest: "Ask how to find a book, check it out to use it at home, and how you should act at the library." Then, to the American host: "Ask him (her) about the use of the library at his (her) school in Mexico."

After the tester is satisfied that students have had ample opportunity (within the 20-minute period) to display their oral skills, and that they have been challenged to the limits of the contexts they can manage, the interview is concluded and the rating sheet is marked. Although there is nothing in the present version of the manual concerning cool-down, or debriefing, presumably, teachers would be well advised to do everything possible to help students feel good about their efforts.

In summary, the progression of tasks in *COPE* from Dialogues 1–17 seems to increase in difficulty as intended by the test designers. Also, the dialogue exchanges conform fairly well to the sort of communicative tasks students in an immersion program might indeed be expected to perform. The role-play aspect is a kind of wild card in the game, however, since some students may take to role-play activities more than others. In this respect it will be necessary to examine pre-test data very carefully with the hope of ruling out the possibility that role-playing may be a task that some students do not perform well even when they have attained substantial proficiency in the language. If so, it is possible that this difficulty could be overcome by suitable training to increase familiarity and facility with the test method.

Also, deliberate attention will need to be paid to the impact of different solutions to the problem of setting-up or selecting pairs of students to be tested. Some careful experimentation will be needed to see how much variability in the task is attributable to alternative solutions in a given classroom situation. The potential impact of the pairing factor grows with the size of the class and is affected by such factors as the variability in the proficiency of students in a given class. If there is great variability in proficiency levels across students, the impact of the pairing solution will, presumably, be greater than in cases where the proficiency varies less. Sex, popularity, and other social variables may also be important to individual performance with a given partner.

Consider, if there are only two students, only one pairing is possible, but there are still two possible arrangements of the pair depending on who gets to be the visitor and who will be the host; for three students there are exactly three pairs possible, but six solutions for the two roles. A class of 24 students yields only 12 pairs but 552 possible solutions to pairing and role assignment.

We need to know that the various ways of setting up the pairs can be controlled to minimize the impact of different possible arrangements on the performance of given individuals. Or, we must be able to train teachers to assign students to pairs and roles so that each student performs optimally. These are difficult research challenges. But if conversational exchanges are to be rated at all, such research challenges cannot be avoided by any imaginable testing method, so *COPE* is not unique in being subject to them.

In its favor, *COPE* will almost certainly have a positive impact on immersion language programs and a spill-over effect into other program types may be expected. The procedure itself will encourage attention to communicative performance in a wide range of conversational contexts (both formal and informal, as the CAL authors note) and teachers too will be trained in some of the things that make for better communication through the use of the rating scales.

The Canadian Tests. A wide range of tests and evaluation procedures have been employed in connection with Canadian immersion programs. Most important from the vantage point of U.S. elementary-school language educators, perhaps, is that these tests and evaluative procedures have been employed in most cases with elementary-school children.

In the evaluation of first-language skills, the following tasks have been used: reconstructing narrative (story-retelling), writing narrative, explaining to someone on the opposite side of an opaque screen how to do something, word-association techniques, variations of cloze procedure, sentence fill-in-the-blank tasks (incorrectly identified as cloze procedure), and rating of skills by parents (Swain and Lapkin, pp. 17f; see their references on each of these tasks).

To evaluate developing skills in the target language, which was French in the earliest cases of immersion experiments, Swain and Lapkin (1982) say that "considerable energy was spent on developing appropriate tests and, in some cases, developing standardized norms" (p. 19). Among those developed was the *Test de rendement en Français* (Commission des Ecoles Catholiques de Montréal, n.d.), a battery of tests which mix discrete-point philosophy and integrative tasks. Swain and Lapkin write

> The test measures such aspects of French achievement as the identification of sounds, word knowledge (synonyms, antonyms, definitions), grammar (verb conjugations, number and gender agreement, recognition of parts of speech, use of conjunctions), spelling, and reading comprehension (p. 19).

Here it is clear that "grammar" is defined in terms of certain aspects of surface structure—in keeping with many applications of discrete-point philosophy.

Other test batteries for assessing developing target language proficiency included the *French Comprehension Tests* (Barik), involving listening to and indicating understanding of words, sentences, and stories, and *Tests de Lecture* (Barik and Swain), consisting of short passages followed by reading-comprehension questions. Tests of auditory and written comprehension were also developed: *Test de compréhension auditive* and *Test de compréhension de l'écrit* (both by Bilingual Education Project, n.d.). Both these tests involved life-like situations likely to be encountered by immersion-program students. The auditory comprehension battery used segments from conversations, radio programs, and the like, and the written battery used excerpts from ads, comics, recipes, poetry, and prose. Each life-like context in both batteries of tests was followed by one or more questions.

Various interview and conversational tasks have also been used to assess target-language development in immersion students, including job interviews, staged conversations, and mock radio or television interviews. Similarly, a substantial variety of writing tasks have been used with more advanced literate students. Typically student performances have been evaluated for the overall communicative effectiveness and for the accuracy of surface forms employed. With reference to spoken language, enunciation, rhythm, and intonation have been served in the evaluation of surface form; in reference to written materials, in addition to global characteristics such as organization, variety, and originality, surface forms have been evaluated in terms of punctuation, spelling, choice of words, and morphology (agreement in number and gender, verb conjugation).

Beyond assessments aimed at the primary or second-language development of students in immersion programs, the Canadian scholars have examined impact on student IQ scores, achievement scores, personality inventories, attitudes, and motivations, as well as, in a few cases, impact on parental and societal attitudes and behavior (see both Swain and Lapkin, 1982, and Cummins, 1984, for references).

Cummins (1984) extends the discussion to a comprehensive review of studies relating the immersion experience to questions about "language disorders/learning disabilities," mental retardation, and minimal brain damage. He concludes

> In response to the frequently asked question whether "immersion" programs are suitable for all children, the answer that emerges from research ... is that immersion programmes, properly understood and implemented, appear to represent an appropriate form of enrichment education for all students (1984, pp. 178f).

He says there exists a

> total absence of empirical support for the concerns of many educators that bilingual instruction is inappropriate (e.g., too "challenging," confusing) for students who are at risk academically or who may be experiencing learning difficulties. This finding is of special relevance to special educators who often assume that children with learning problems would be better off in an English-only programme (pp. 177f).

Some readers will think they see a contradiction here between Cummins' conclusion about the appropriateness of immersion programming to all children and what he says about the "low threshold" discussed above (see section 3.3), but the difficulty may be only apparent. It may be resolved in part by considering the distinction between cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) as well as the salient differences between FL and immersion programs. While BICS are developed early and naturally in nearly all children, CALP, according to Cummins, tends to come later and requires weaning students from dependence on immediate physical context (the here-and-now) and cognitively moving them toward increasingly demanding conceptualizations.

For instance, a child may show lots of facility in interacting with other children on the playground (BICS), and yet experience considerable difficulty in the classroom when it comes to reading, writing, calculating, or participating in a discussion of grammatical rules, word-meanings, parts of speech, etc.—all of which are similar in critical respects to tasks often set before the FL student.

If language proficiency and communicative ability may be differentiated as Cummins has suggested, and if FL programs rely heavily on CALP (the cognitive/academic aspect of language proficiency), while immersion programs depend less on CALP and more on BICS, it would seem plausible that a student might not be in a position to benefit much from FL instruction (due to falling below the requisite threshold especially in CALP development) while he/she would be in a position to benefit from immersion (which depends more on BICS development at first, followed only later by CALP).

Krashen's distinction between the cognitive orientation of traditional FL teaching in the classroom, which may result in formal "learning," and the context-rich experience of language "acquisition" in more natural settings offers a distinction that in some ways parallels Cummins' CALP/BICS dichotomy. In any case, without hanging any great claims on either of these dichotomies, that is, "learning/acquisition" or "CALP/BICS," it seems safe to say that both capture and express the essence of distinctions often suggested to language teachers by practical observations in and outside the classroom.

In conclusion to the discussion of the Canadian immersion experience, which has done much to enrich our knowledge of both practice and theory in elementary-school foreign languages, it may be noted that children in immersion classrooms typically achieve levels of target-language proficiency that rival those of comparable native speakers, without any significant detriment to primary language development. Research with tests aimed at IQ, achievement, and attitudes, in general, sustains the thesis that immersion education is an enriching and enabling experience for children. Pragmatic thinking along the lines of Krashen and others can help us understand why this is so.

5.4. Broadening the Scope of Language Testing

Any psychologist or measurement specialist must admit that the intellectual uniqueness of human abilities is seen most vividly in the various aspects of the use and acquisition of language(s). This is not to minimize the importance of music, art, dance, athletics, etc., but to give a realistic appraisal of the importance of the development of language abilities. Therefore, it may reasonably be argued that almost every experimental study of human intellectual skills involves language ability either directly or indirectly (in mathematical reasoning, abstract semiotic abilities of a propositional sort are about all that is involved; see Moore, p. 3).

It follows that language testing and the research that stems from it will have a much wider scope than might have been expected by the typical language teacher prior to any serious contemplation of the subject. Among the consequences of the inevitably broadening scope of language testing and research is a clarion call for excellence on the part of language teachers. Language teachers—and others who indirectly help students develop their semiotic skills (first language and foreign language, gestural, sensorimotor, artistic, musical, etc.)—may well hold the very keys that unlock the door of intelligence itself.

While Jensen, Herrnstein, Wagner, and Boyle may argue that IQ tests measure innate intelligence, the language testing research shows clearly that what verbal IQ tests measure most is proficiency in the language of the test.

Even nonverbal, or performance IQ tests, are basically tests of ability to manipulate semiotic representations in propositionally complex ways (cf. Oller, 1981; Streiff, 1983). For many non-English-speaking minority children, especially those whose primary language or dialect is distinct from the one used in the test, IQ tests in standard English must be very indirectly related to innate intellectual abilities. For these minority children the thing primarily assessed by such tests is their ability to understand English (cf. Hakuta).

Language testing research has shown that there is a lot more mythology and social consensus than science in a great deal of what passes for psychological and educational theory (see Coles; Cummins, 1984; Swanson; Hamayan and Damico). The persistent defense of discrete-point approaches to teaching and testing of languages is blatant evidence of this proposition. Practice in education, sad to say, is probably more influenced by trends and fads than by careful theory and experimental verification.

Experience in the profession also shows that curricula tend to be influenced more by existing standardized tests than by almost anything else. Rather than moan and groan about this, educators everywhere should acknowledge the impact of tests on curricula and devise ever better tests. The inevitable outcome of such a strategy should be to guarantee long-term improvement in elementary-school foreign language curricula.

Hope for such an impact may be held out for tests like *FTS* and *COPE*. Evidence that FL tests of the pragmatic sort, e.g., elicited imitation, oral interviewing, dictation, cloze procedure, controlled essay tasks, reading comprehension tests, etc., are already having such an impact world-wide is not difficult to come by.

While thoughtful administrators often worry about the widespread tendency to "teach to the test" or to take the test itself wholesale into the classroom and use it as the curriculum, if the foreign language tests reflected authentic, episodically organized, well structured, motivated discourse in the target language, the harm of teaching the tests would be minimized if not eliminated. Also, implicit standards would be set for students and teachers alike pointing them in the direction of meaningful native-like norms of target-language skills. Moreover, the research shows that pragmatic tests are hardly susceptible to trivial training effects while discrete-point tests are excessively susceptible to such effects (Kim). Further, pragmatic tests have scalability properties and diagnostic values that cannot be found in the more traditional discrete-point tests.

I see no reason not to use pragmatic tests to shape the curriculum. Tests need not be a bludgeon to beat students over the head or to make unseemly comparisons among them or between teachers. They may as easily be used as rewards for superior performers in all categories. Tests are neutral, detached, objective measures, the performance on which ought hardly be influenced by the feelings of students, teachers, or administrators.

Of course, poor performance on a valid language test is also possible. But we simply cannot remove all the genuine risk of real-life experiences. All of us are at risk and, if the theory advocated here is correct, it is this at-risk-ness that makes life interesting. What I can do as a teacher to help ease the pain for both myself and my students is to care about them. I can share the responsibility for helping them succeed. As Cazden recommends, I can be an advocate rather than an adversary. I can praise them and enjoy their successes with them and share the blame whenever we fail.

In the final analysis, valid testing is the only reasonable basis for defining and evaluating goals, methods, and results. To the extent that it is valid, testing is just an independent vantage point that defines and measures how well we are doing. No matter how much it may be dreaded, and no matter how much we might like to avoid finding out, we need to know what only valid tests can tell us.

Notes

[1] We must assume that the communicator is honest, sincere, and sane. Otherwise, the possibility of a fit between expression and intention disintegrates. If the communicator is a pathological liar, a devious manipulator, or just crazy, genuine communication cannot occur. The communicator must (1) intend to tell the truth, (2) act for the benefit of another, and (3) be competent to judge things in the external world.

[2] Einstein and Dewey certainly need no introduction, but Peirce is less well-known. In 1959, Ernest Nagel wrote: "There is a fair consensus among historians of ideas that Charles Sanders Peirce remains the most original, versatile and comprehensive philosophic mind this country has yet produced" (1959, p. 185). Of several series of Peirce writings, I have cited only Moore et al. (1984), and Oller (1989b). Also see Roman Jakobson (1980) for superlative praise of Peirce.

The idea that there is reason to be doubtful about the existence of a real external world, was put forward most ably by a string of philosophers culminating in David Hume [1711–1776] whose best known modern disciple was Bertrand Russell [1872–1970]. Interestingly, Peirce said of Hume almost exactly what Einstein and Dewey would later say of both Hume and Russell. The consequence of the whole exchange was that there is no logical basis for doubting the existence of a real external world. Moreover, to doubt the existence of the real world is to see cultural differences, disagreements, hallucinations, etc. as purely undefinable fictions. Or, as both Peirce and Einstein said, it is to make thinking itself an impossibility.

[3] In any intentional act of representation, i.e., in any volitional expression of meaning, two logical positions are assumed at the outset. They may be thought of in terms of the grammatical distinction between "first person" and "second person." Logically, they involve (1) an originator (singular or plural) who expresses or represents some meaning, and (2) an interpreter, possibly the same individual or group as the first, who acts as such but in a logically secondary role.

Now, a third logical position is implied by the relationship between the first two. If the teacher and the student(s) are to come into any relationship, it follows that there must be a common ground in order for the first two logical positions to be defined. That common ground constitutes a third logical position.

It may be thought of as the vantage-point of a third party to an act of communication between the first two, or, as the external world in which the act and actors are situated. Or, it may be thought of as the objective viewpoint that an observer would be able to achieve if that observer had access to whatever knowledge might be shared between the first and second parties. Or, it may be thought of as the position occupied when the self observes its varying attitudes and roles as originator and interpreter (first and second person), which still implies (in a logically necessary manner) a third position, distinct from the first two.

All these definitions of the third position come to much the same thing logically: namely, that there is an external world and that we are in it. An admission of this much is necessary in order to allow a sufficient basis for communication to occur. Such an admission is also necessary in order for language acquisition to occur or for language teaching to be a viable possibility. That is, there must be something external to the first and second parties in order for them to have anything whatever to share or communicate about. If that external, third position did not exist, communication between any two potential interlocutors, or knowledge of any sort within one and the same person, would be a logical impossibility. Neither would it be possible for languages to be acquired. Or, as Peirce argued, language implies community within a common space-time continuum (cf. Peirce, ca. 1868, in Moore, et al., p. 239). Looking to more recent theory, Gardner (1985) is surely correct in stressing the social aspects of language acquisition, but the fact that communication involves societies as well as individuals is not an idea that originated with the recent wave of "social psychology" in the twentieth century. Nor, so far as I know, does Gardner make any such claim.

In Peirce's theory, it follows that any person occupies variously and at all times more or less all three positions. At one moment the interlocutor is first person, at another, second person, and at all times the interlocutor is in the third position and functions also as a third person, observer of his or her own acts. As third person, anyone also takes into account, more or less, what goes on in the external world, including overt, perceived acts of others, the existence of both the other persons and their acts, and the existence of a more or less limitless community beyond them. Remove the third position and any possibility of a distinction between act and intention, deed and recollection, consciousness and memory, knowledge and knower, and many similar ones, vaporize. Allow the third position together with the other two and all these distinctions are provided for.

[4] In 1983 Spolsky quoted himself at great length to try to distance his former statements, apparently, from the controversy that had ensued between 1968 and 1983 concerning the extent and character of a general factor of language proficiency.

[5] I do not mean to endorse the superficial prescriptivism that has sometimes been associated erroneously with FL teaching. I refer to "grammar" as the tacit knowledge that native speakers of a language acquire without, for the most part, even knowing they are doing so. Superficial "rules of usage" that provide the basis for a great deal of misunderstanding in English (and FL) textbooks are decidedly not in view here. On the contrary, the examination of such "rules" is generally out of place in FL classrooms until

and unless it can be profitably carried on in the FL. It is especially out of place in FLES curricula (cf. Cummins).

[6] Another set of relevant factors as Kurt Müller points out in personal communication is the whole constellation of socioeconomic variables. These, however, I believe, are logically secondary to the question of proficiency in the language of the tests, though they cannot be ignored. On the other hand, at least one prominent researcher in the field, Richard Herrnstein, has contended that IQ itself is the result of natural socioeconomic sorting in what he calls the "meritocracy." His theory has not gone without criticism, and I believe that Herrnstein is fundamentally wrong. In explaining variance in mental tests, I would argue that proficiency in the language of the tests plays a more immediate causal role.

[7] Many "referential questions"—ones to which the teacher does not know the answer in advance, are just as objectionable as "display questions." For instance, is it more meaningful for the teacher to ask, "Do you have a watch in your pocket?" than to ask, "Is there a clock on the wall?" Does the question to which the teacher may not know the answer contain intrinsically more information than the other? Is either apt to elicit an intense effort to construct or interpret discourse in the target language? Or are they not in fact about equal in both informativeness and in their apparent lack of authentic communicative motivation? If they are about equal in informativeness, and in lack of motivation, then the real problem must reside in some concept that reaches beyond the definition of mere informativeness.

[8] More recently this same mentality has been extended to what have been called "notions" and "functions" of speech acts and discourse (cf. Farhady, 1983b). The latter extension is a natural and useful one, but it does not really depart from discrete-point theory. It continues to view language proficiency as a taxonomy of elements arranged in various lists.

[9] Anticipation of the modern emphasis on notions and functions can be seen here (cf. references in Farhady, 1983b).

[10] See esp. Upshur and Fata; Jones and Spolsky; Palmer and Spolsky; Oller and Perkins; Cziko; Upshur, 1979; Canale and Swain; Palmer et al.; Erickson and Omark; Alderson and Hughes; Oller, 1983a, 1986; Hughes and Porter; Fouly and Cziko; Stansfield; Brown, 1988b; Bachman; and particularly the journal *Language Testing*, published by Edward Arnold since 1984).

[11] According to results of Snow et al., it is the "receptive skills" of listening and reading that most resist attrition after students have exited a seven-year immersion program. The "productive skills," speaking and writing, tend to suffer more from forgetting due apparently to disuse.

[12] This relationship was demonstrated by a Chi-square test, harking back to a similarly peculiar procedure by Spolsky (1969). What is strange about the procedure is that it begins by throwing away a lot of the potentially interesting variance in the questionnaire data by reducing scores to a simple dichotomy of high and low. In the case of Snow et al., the dichotomization was accomplished in terms of factor scores defined through an exploratory analysis that expunged items uncorrelated with emergent clusters.

[13] I am especially grateful to the Center for Applied Linguistics, particularly to Nancy Rhodes, for supplying copies of the tests in question. The opinions expressed, of course, are not necessarily endorsed or rejected by CAL but are due exclusively to my own

analysis. On the other hand, I am grateful to the several readers (all anonymous except for Kurt Müller) associated with the National Council/American Forum National FLES Project who suggested a number of improvements to the paper. For anything still needing repair, I am afraid, I must take sole responsibility.

[14] The distinction made explicit here is roughly the one proposed by Cummins (1979; 1983, pp. 119–23; also see Canale, 1983) between "cognitive academic language proficiency" (CALP) and "basic interpersonal communicative skills" (BICS).

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Mother Tongue and Father Grammar, or, Why Should Children Learn a Second Language?

Donald G. Marshall

The usual arguments for teaching children a second language are practical. Competitiveness in a global economy requires skills that give entry to foreign markets. Awareness of and sensitivity to other cultures prepares citizens to understand and support an intelligent, consistent, and effective foreign policy. The languages and cultures of immigrant populations in the United States must be acknowledged and respected even as we seek, in a spirit of tolerance and pluralism, to forge anew one nation, indivisible. Studying a second language improves written and spoken English, and these are skills vital for the job market and for coping with modern life. Language learning is easier in childhood, and what is learned is retained longer. The earlier the start with language study, the greater the likelihood of attaining fluency. All these practical arguments are strong and convincing. But my aim is different. I want to reflect philosophically and historically on the values of language learning. Though I have studied several languages, I have no experience teaching a second language, nor can I claim familiarity with the body of research in second-language pedagogy. Even so, most of my remarks ultimately address, under correction, my fellow teachers.

None of the arguments for language study I have just rehearsed would make much sense to a child. Adults may have practical reasons for wanting children to learn a second language, but children need a more immediate motive. The father of the great seventeenth-century French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal delighted his son by inventing a secret language in which they could communicate. One day, the boy came to his father in distress with the news that someone had found out their code and printed whole books in it. The father had to reveal his true secret: he had taught his son Greek! This

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charming story is colored by the dream of Renaissance humanist schoolmasters that second-language study could be turned into an effortless game. In our more suspicious age, we may draw a different lesson. The young Pascal may have sought to share a special intimacy with his father or perhaps to appropriate a paternal power. One need hardly be a psychoanalyst to guess that young children are allured by mysterious powers they understand in emotional rather than practical terms.

And what of teachers? They may find the practical arguments convincing, but elementary school teachers just as much as college professors of liberal arts repudiate the reduction of education to the merely instrumental. Education is not simply a means for engineering children into the kinds of adults current economic or social policies prefer. Teachers may see more virtue in students' motives, however passional. Some inner-city black children, taught Latin, gain a feeling of power from knowing something prestigious and exclusive that may be more valuable than the practical language skills they acquire. But while students' desires and interests motivate their study, no adult can responsibly assume that children's wants and needs are the same. It is a fateful dilemma that educators unavoidably find themselves making one kind of argument to those who pay for education; another to students, who must find a motive for harnessing their energies to accomplish the tasks set them; and yet a third to each other. At any grade level, there remains a liberal core in education for which it is the teacher's responsibility to speak. The professional dignity of teaching rests not simply on the skill of finding means to ends chosen by others—whether by society at large, the students' parents, or even the students themselves. Its basis is a vision of what kind of people children can become. Teaching presupposes the humbling task of discerning what is good for the student, or more precisely, what good the student is aiming at, even unaware.

This conclusion can be drawn from Plato's *Phaedrus*, a dialogue that examines among many other topics the teaching of rhetoric—what we would call "the language arts." When he encounters Socrates, the young Phaedrus has already fallen under the spell of the sophist and teacher Lysias. To display the skill he teaches, Lysias has written a dazzling speech in the fictional persona of a lover, who ingeniously tries to seduce a boy by feigning indifference and then arguing that the boy will be better off yielding to one who does not love him than to one who does. Distracted consciously by the paradoxical argument and polished style and unconsciously, one suspects, by the illicit theme, Phaedrus fails to realize that he has been even more corrupted by Lysias than the fictional boy by the would-be lover, corrupted intellectually and spiritually, not just sexually and physically. In the course of the dialogue, Socrates shows him that real love is a sort of madness, incapable of this cool and practical calculation of worldly advantage or power over another. Its origin and destination are divine—and for Socrates, "the divine" means some supreme insight into the good. The art of the true teacher is to discern the path the student is following unaware toward the good and to help the student along that path. Like one who genuinely loves, the teacher seeks what is good for the student, not what is convenient or advantageous to the teacher or to society. Though an authority based on discerning what is good for someone else is obviously fraught with moral danger, the teacher cannot shift this responsibility to the students, for they cannot yet see clearly for themselves what is good.

I

The question, then, is what is the good in a child's learning a second language? Perhaps the best starting point for our answer is to reflect on the subjective experience of encountering a foreign word. We can then pursue the stages of language acquisition that culminate in fluency. That final goal will invite us to pass beyond the individual learner to the significance of language learning in the broader context of the Western cultural tradition.

I remember very well when I first studied Russian the uncanny feeling of staring at a printed word and only after a slow and painful struggle suddenly realizing that these strange shapes transliterated a quite familiar loan-word, "concert." Studying another language seems like learning to read. Walter Ong, in *Orality and Literacy* (London: Methuen, 1982), and Jack Goody and Ian Watt, in "Consequences of Literacy" (*Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. Jack Goody [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968]: 27–68) have surveyed work on orality and literacy. They spell out the far-reaching alteration literacy brings about in individuals and societies. Encountering another language may have equally significant effects.

Even an unknown word in our own language has a phonic and syntactic shape we recognize. We know that words which lie beyond the range of our vocabulary can be explained in simpler, more common words, so that learning them does not disturb the basic semantic structure we have assimilated. But a genuinely foreign word yields a quite different linguistic experience. We cannot estimate its commonness; exotic to us, it may be ordinary to its native users. An alien semantic range makes its meaning difficult to explain or fit into our language. This is true even of foreign phrases in common use to supply a gap in our native vocabulary. That their alienness persists shows in our hesitation about how to pronounce them, whether to keep to their "correct" foreign sound or to assimilate them to native patterns. In America, proper names retain this peculiar feeling, since as a country of immigrants, we frequently bear names that are truly at home only in other languages. A foreign word is not simply added to our vocabulary, nor simply a synonym. It presents a special problem for us, even when its meaning or use become familiar, for speaking the word inevitably transports us out of our own language into another. Hence, it can be used purely to evoke a foreign atmosphere, as with the French words needlessly scattered across the fields of cookery, fashion, and cosmetics, or the bogus-Danish "Häagen Dazs."

A foreign word thus testifies that there exist *other* languages, that language is not one, but many. Even young children can play the game of "speaking" another language. Even if they imitate no actual language, they are pretending to "mean" something, not merely babbling nonsense syllables. A grown-up tourist can find it amusing, but disconcerting, to hear his own language echo in the mocking imitation of a playful child. Children here experience the formal basis of language: sounds convey meaning, but conceal it too. To a reflective mind, this game reveals unexpected depths: one does not master "language," but only *a* language.

In *Huckleberry Finn* Huck informs Jim that whole nations speak a language other than English. He offers an explanatory analogy: cows don't talk like horses. But Jim's reply is forceful: a Frenchman is not a cow, but a man, and if he's a man, why doesn't he talk like a man? This retort underscores something essential. An important part of the game is not only pretending to mean something, but pretending to *exchange* meaning. My daughter babbles a phrase in "French" or "Spanish" and then looks expectantly for a reply. The all-knowing adult is mildly mocked. But more telling is that my daughter and son carry on a "conversation" in this mock tongue neither understands, but both *want* to learn. The dynamic is social: to know a language is to join the others who know it. Like the young Pascal, children love secret codes that make them part of a special group, the more exclusive the better. In his training manual for preachers, *On Christian Doctrine*, St. Augustine ponders whether one should study pagan authors. Their culture and values offend the Christian, yet one must learn from them Greek and Latin in order to read Scriptures and the Church Fathers. Astrology is an invention of the devil. In learning its terms, even for the pious purpose of explaining something in Scripture, have we not entered a compact with the devil, even if only the social compact from which these words get their meanings? In a concrete but penetrating fashion, Augustine reminds us that words have meaning only for a group of people and that one may need to be careful what company words make you keep. German language study was widely dropped from American schools when World War I broke out; "hamburger" was even renamed "Salisbury steak." Every language implies the existence of a group. A foreign word stirs one's curiosity about these mysterious others.

While it is doubtful that anyone who was not raised bilingual ever loses the sense that his or her native language simply *is* "language," this consciousness of the diversity of languages encourages a reorientation toward one's native language and the phenomenon of language more generally. Language is a stream of articulated sound used by a group of people to convey shared meanings. It only exists as particular languages. They are arranged for us in concentric circles radiating from the familiar to the alien, the native to the foreign, the fluent to the unintelligible, charting our position on the map of the human language world. But our circles overlap with circles centered on other individuals.

Experiencing the foreign brings a recognition of personal limits, of an incapacity to do something that a child of six or seven is expected to have mastered. We must not neglect the negativity of this moment. Many adults are never reconciled to this evidence of the limits of the whole world of meaning, values, and social life which the mastery of language has brought them. Their attitude was colorfully expressed by "Ma" Ferguson, the first woman governor of Texas: "If English was good enough for Jesus, it's good enough for me." The philosopher Martin Heidegger images language as "the house of Being." Our attachment to this "house," to the native language in which we dwell, has never been more powerfully expressed than in Shakespeare's *Richard II*, where Mowbray, banished for life, bursts out:

> The language I have learnt these forty years,
> My native English, now I must forgo;
> And now my tongue's use is to me no more
> Than an unstringed viol or a harp,
> Or like a cunning instrument cas'd up
> Or, being open, put into his hands
> That knows no touch to tune the harmony.
> Within my mouth you have enjail'd my tongue,
> Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;
> And dull, unfeeling, barren ignorance
> Is made my jailer to attend on me.
> I am too old to fawn upon a nurse,
> Too far in years to be a pupil now.
> What is thy sentence then but speechless death,
> Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?
> (I, iii, 159–73)

The controversial campaign to declare English the "official language" of the United States feeds on the shock of this discovery. When they encounter in their native country an enclave where English is very much the second language, some monolingual Americans react with hostility and project conspiratorial fears onto those whose language marks them as a separate group. In his treatise on *Rhetoric*, Aristotle recommends giving one's style distinctiveness by using unusual or dialect terms. But he warns that to use too many turns one's speech into a jargon. The audience will not only find this unintelligible but, he implies, see the speaker as an alien, who forfeits the right to address the public on affairs of common concern. If America is a land of immigrants, it is a land of immigrants who overwhelmingly *became* monolingual English speakers, sometimes at great personal and emotional cost. Those whose family memory reaches back to that moment of linguistic commitment to a new country may suspect, however unjustly, that some newer immigrants are holding back from the same commitment. The agonies of countries riven by separatist language movements—from Canada to Italy, from Britain to India—demonstrate fears of political instability when a country lacks a common language. One of the first fruits of *glasnost* has been the reemergence of demands for autonomy by suppressed language groups, such as Armenians, Estonians, and Latvians.

To understand the source and depth of these fears is not, of course, to share them. I have dwelt on them at some length because advocates of second-language study may refuse them admission to thoughtful reflection. But one may wonder why, despite endorsements by prominent political, business, and educational leaders, the study of other languages advances so slowly in this country. Is it only a matter of practical obstacles? I well remember the loud cries for the study of Russian in secondary school that followed the launching of Sputnik. It is true that capable teachers were few and that many students grew discouraged when they found that it would take hard work to learn Russian. But even more, these calls faded rapidly when a new president committed the United States to landing the first man on the moon. In this light, we can see that the practical arguments for language study carry an unsettling undertext. If we must study languages to compete economically, it is because we have lost our global economic dominance and turned into a debtor nation, whose standard of living is threatened in a newly interdependent world. If we must be more aware of the countries and cultures our foreign policy deals with, it is because our world is filled with hostilities and potential wars. If we must provide for the large enclaves of immigrants in our country, it is because the United States is changing demographically in ways that will have unforeseeable consequences, not all of them positive. In fact we are asking native speakers of what is undoubtedly the dominant language in the world to suppress that unquestioned sense of dominance, even though masses of people around the world eagerly embrace the "Americanization" of global culture. Again, one need not be a card-carrying Freudian to believe that these threatening subtexts are *felt* even by those who consciously believe the arguments I have rehearsed and support language study in the schools.

For many reasons, we must learn to see our fellow citizens who speak other languages as a vital and positive resource. Given the power of economic and social realities, not only is the primacy of English not threatened by these immigrants, but deliberate steps will have to be taken to preserve the levels of fluency and diversity of languages we now enjoy.

But let me return to the individual child. From a more narrowly pedagogical point of view, teachers need to reflect seriously on the obstacles children experience to such fundamental tasks as learning to write or learning another language. These require a far-reaching reconstruction of our very being and can therefore be deeply disturbing. Unless we grasp how intensely the diversity of languages brings us up against our human limits, we will miss the existential depth of the resistance to language learning we may encounter.

It is precisely this existential depth and seriousness in our encounter with other languages that make language study essential to education. Learning another language is not simply a technical skill to be added to the list society demands. It has been recognized since antiquity that language is closely bound to our human essence. Aristotle defines human beings as "political animals," not because they gather in colonies or herds like bees or cattle, but because they have language in which they share a common perception of what is good and bad, helpful and harmful. In the *De Officiis* ["on duties"], Cicero echoes him: the bond of society consists in *ratio et oratio*, ["reason and speech"] (the Latin words jointly translate Aristotle's *logos*). The Gospel of John calls Jesus "the Word," which it sees as the universal creative power. In our own century, philosophers from Ernst Cassirer to Martin Heidegger, from Ludwig Wittgenstein to Jacques Derrida, have sought in language what is basic to human being. Whatever the vicissitudes of economic and social circumstances, the reason language study should be a part of education from the very beginning is that language is essential to what we are.

Because it is closely linked to the recognition of our own limits, the encounter with a foreign language makes us examine our identity, and this experience is the content of all education worthy of the name. In his great book *Truth and Method*, the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer describes the general structure of experience in just these terms. Whenever we discover that things are not as we had taken it for granted they were, we are led not simply to correct an error, but to see that we always move within the limits of assumptions we are never fully aware of, and that in particular situations, other assumptions may become valid. It is not enough to grasp this as a mere theory, but each of us must feel for ourselves what it means that "we learn from our mistakes." Greek tragedy centers on the maxim, *pathei mathei*, human beings grow wise through suffering. The suffering intended here is not something anyone can avoid, for those who do not learn to sense their own limits suffer from *hubris*, an arrogant pride and self-sufficiency that life punishes ruthlessly. It is because we feel the limits and insufficiencies of what we know and are that we open ourselves to new perspectives, new insights, new realities. For Plato, knowledge begins in questioning, but as Socrates makes evident, questioning begins in a recognition of one's own ignorance and need to learn. Our humanity rests on "the constant resourceful restoration of humility," as R.P. Blackmur formulates the central theme of Jane Austen's novels. Someone who has become "experienced" in this sense is not a dogmatic know-it-all, now sure that everything he thinks is true, but on the contrary, more tolerant: experience makes one open to further experience. Every teacher knows that the most genuinely educated persons are far more drawn to explore what they do not know than satisfied with what they do know. It is deeply revealing that a person who has learned one foreign language finds it increasingly easier to learn another and yet another. As thinking beings, we do not simply have our thoughts, we are our thoughts. Language is not just a means of thought, it is its very body. The encounter with another language is the most fundamental encounter with the limits of our own thinking and being and with the possibility of other ways of thinking and of being human. It is finally the most intimate possible encounter with the other people to whom a "foreign" language is "native." There can be no more important experience in education.

The most powerful testimony I know to what I have been describing can be found in the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*. As a young man, Malcolm spent a term in prison for robbery. Observant and intelligent, he suddenly realized what distinguished prisoners who were dominant and leaders from those whose incapacities marked them as permanent victims: the difference was the power a command of language conferred. From that day, Malcolm read everything, studied the dictionary, and practiced speaking. Having gained considerable verbal skill, he first turned it to use as a con artist. But he was gradually drawn to the "Black Muslim" movement and began to develop a broader awareness of the moral and political responsibilities his talents and intelligence imposed. The climax of this conversion was a pilgrimage to Mecca. Here the man whose first conversion had taught him the power of words—a power he misused to commit crimes, but then responsibly used as a political leader—underwent a second conversion. Knowing not a word of Arabic, he again became a literal "infant," a word whose Latin root means "one who cannot speak." The kindness of the total strangers who fed him and helped him on this pilgrimage brought to his experience the deepest ethical reality of language: it is not a device merely to tell others what we want, nor to exercise power over them; it is not simply a demand or a command. Rather, it lets us hear other human beings as human and thereby to find our own humanity. The sheer encounter with the reality of another language produced an experience of limits which was not for Malcolm X negative, but positive: a revelation of his own identity which opened the way toward dialogue, an interchange between I and Thou which is not a struggle for power, but whose essence, as the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas says, is the "diaconal," the call to service. There emerged a vision of humanity, diverse yet one, whose social and political implications Malcolm was only beginning to articulate when an assassin cut short his life. His *Autobiography*, written with the help of Alex Haley, endures as a witness to the profound insight the experience with another language can spark.

II

Because of the depth of commitment needed to study another language, it is important to reflect on its pedagogy, that is, on the experience that passes between the first discovery that there are other languages and that moment which very few of us will reach when we find ourselves "at home" in another language. Obviously, learning another language is a deliberate process quite different from the unconscious and automatic assimilation of one's native language. It is true that no one learns to speak by learning and applying rules. This recognition underlies the "oral/aural" method, which dominates the contemporary pedagogy of living languages. Given what we know from the Swiss psychologist Piaget about the cognitive development of children, teaching abstract concepts and rules of grammar—even if linguists could agree on what they are!—is necessarily inefficient and ineffective. The linguist Michael Shapiro has even questioned whether there are "rules" outside the linguists' disciplined descriptions of languages. We seem to feel their presence mostly negatively, when we recognize an "error" in speaking, as though the rule and the error sprang into existence together.

Yet we do recognize rules and are at least sometimes positively aware of a particular rule of grammar or style to which we consciously adhere in speaking, even if the rule describes only one or a few features of our utterance. In fact, for over two millennia, languages were normally studied out of rule books. This experience teaches us that the issue is not simply technical or instrumental. Grammar books and dictionaries elaborate the reality that in second-language study, the language becomes an object of *conscious* reflection. One of the first grammarians, the Roman Varro, reviews at length the debate between those who think language simply follows custom and usage (the "anomalists") and those who believe it follows principles or rules (the "analogists"). In his treatise *On Eloquence in the Vernacular*, Dante makes the most powerful case on behalf of "grammar." We learn our first language from our mother or nurse, he says. But in fact language has a rational essence: it is a means for communicating the variable thoughts of our minds. Just this variability allows language to change and diverge into many dialects, until those who speak one dialect become unintelligible to those who speak another. To overcome this drift, certain philosophers established principles to restrain linguistic change. These principles are "grammar," which Latin possesses preeminently. As a consequence, it is possible to understand and communicate in Latin truths found by people of various eras and places. Dante asserts the same is possible for Italian—a bold claim in his time. Because there can be a "grammar" for Italian, it too can be an "illustrious" language in which insights into the truth of human life can be formulated and communicated. While the oral/aural method has proven its effectiveness, the refusal to cite or discuss rules of grammar with students can become a rigid dogma that constricts the student's grasp not only of a particular language, but of the general nature of language. My point is simply that the dialectic between usage and grammar is and ought to be part of any study of language.

What may be gained for one's native language is a realization that it too can be made the object of a conscious reflection that may lead to formulating "rules." In such "rules," we recognize an ideal or standard for our language—not one which actually governs it, but one we feel *should* govern *us*, if we are to attain not just the adequate expression of our meaning, but something more: what we call "good style" or what was once called "eloquence." To "improve" one's mastery of one's own language is a rather strange idea. It means bringing one's native language into harmony with standards or principles derived not just from the dialect of a dominant social group, but from a conscious awareness of the language's resources for meaning. This awareness is most acute, of course, in literature and especially poetry. There is a real sense in which poetry is like a foreign language within our native language. It makes actual the possibilities of language which are latent or obscured in everyday talk. It becomes, so to speak, "hypergrammatical," by developing special rules: meter; enriched sound patterns, including rhymes; frequently, distinct words and syntactic patterns. These are developed out of ordinary language, so that understanding poetry is always the severest test of our linguistic mastery. In my experience, a student who has come to terms with the strangeness of language in another tongue is much readier to come to terms with the strangeness of his own tongue in a poet like Shakespeare or Gerard Manley Hopkins. It is surely no accident that virtually every great English poet studied and in many cases translated from other languages.

The path to fluency is long. Everyone wants to *know* another language, but not to *learn* it. A student's interest flags, and global interdependence is too shadowy to outweigh the drudgery. Americans are impatient by nature, and an age of television does not encourage concentrated or sustained effort. But languages cannot be learned fitfully. Fluency seems impossibly remote, especially when it lacks embodiment in real people the student knows. Children who are most successful in learning another language ordinarily have parents who do not simply value this ability, but possess it. Public figures who call for language learning are themselves by and large monolingual. We must face frankly and admit to the society at large that few students ever have or ever will attain fluency. This is true not just in the United States, but universally, as

American travellers who have been told that in other countries "everyone" speaks English discover, sometimes painfully. We must be able to argue for the intrinsic value of language study, even when the student falls short of fluency. Even more, teachers must see and believe there is value in this distinct and intermediate stage, that is, in the labor of language study. Every teacher has encountered the sometimes bitter resentment of students who have travelled to another country and found how little mastery their two or three years of formal language study gained for them. Precisely because it is sensitivity to students' feelings that makes them good teachers, when students grow discouraged, teachers may lose heart for the effort of keeping language study in the curriculum for more than a few highly motivated students. It will be hard to defend early exposure to languages if teachers cannot sustain a commitment to continued study. But the only firm foundation for that commitment is the conviction that such study has intrinsic value.

The value I want to claim will not be surprising and may make many educators uncomfortable. It is close kin to the argument that the effort of studying hard subjects is "good for your character." This is the sort of cliché social science researchers delight to demolish. But I think we should be cautious about discarding an opinion that has seemed obvious to the common sense of humankind for many centuries. Is it possible that an important truth might here elude not only critique, but even confirmation by the recently invented methods of social science research? Everyone knows that whoever persists in a course of behavior, even a trivial one, acquires habits of thinking and acting that become half-conscious constituents of character resistant to change. Aristotle calls this *hexis* or "disposition," and insists against Plato's critique that habit is not merely harmful, so that even our virtues should become habitual. It is easy to *say* that in encountering another language, we become aware of the others who speak it. But that awareness is abstract and void without a long and concretely detailed process to fill it in. In much the same way, the elaborate rules and rituals of etiquette fill out concretely the vague ideal of "being considerate of others." Those who love love each other in detail.

Insofar as a particular language is closely identified with the very being of those who speak it, to submit oneself to the discipline of studying that language in detail, of going beyond a few words and phrases, is an ethical act of the deepest kind. No traveller who has seen the pleased face of a "native" when you unexpectedly speak their language, even fumblingly, will doubt this. Persistence in mastering even trivial skills—say, for example, hitting a small thrown ball with a stick or throwing a somewhat larger ball through a hoop raised ten feet off the ground—has some value, a value widely acknowledged in our society. Surely we can win recognition that persistence in language study, where something far more important is at stake, is correspondingly more important. Even if we never master another language nor encounter one who speaks it, by persisting in studying it, we acknowledge the existence of the invisible others to whom it is native. To treat with respect even those not present to us is a high virtue, much as Maimonides defines as the highest charity that in which neither the giver nor the receiver is known to the other.

There is, moreover, a certain ethics in our bearing toward language itself. This is an elusive matter, and probably behind it lies respect toward the invisible community to which language always belongs. But just as a racist joke is an unacceptable injury even when told outside the hearing of any member of the ridiculed group, casual and thoughtless abuses of a language are an injury to the whole body of those who use it, as well as to those who have used it in the past and to those who will use it in the future. To learn another language, to struggle to speak it "correctly" and to follow its rules, even where they differ most from those of our own language and seem to us most unintelligible and strange, is to discover that in every language there is something that calls for our observance and respect. It is a striking fact that students who resent a teacher's correcting errors and infelicities of English see at once the legitimacy of correcting the errors they make in another language. In learning to respect another language, at least some students will learn respect for their own.

III

I have reflected on one's initial encounter with a foreign word and on the intermediate stage of formal study. But even though few children will reach fluency, we must say something about it, since language study is oriented toward fluency as its final aim. To attain fluency is to experience most fully the productivity of the venture beyond one's native way of thinking. Contemporary language teachers rightly stress the age-old insight that learners have reached the revelatory experience only after they have come to think and act, to *live* directly in a second language. A superficial experience with a second language is not enough to overcome our natural linguistic egocentrism and to give concrete reality to our abstract awareness that other people really do live inside their native languages. Even students whose first lessons follow the oral/aural method are likely to lapse into seeing some English "equivalent" as the real meaning of the foreign words they hear. To learn another language thoroughly is to see that every language is adequate to express the human experience of the world. Language differs from ethics or politics or even mathematics in that here claims of universal validity are senseless. No language is superior to another, and none can pretend to be the universal standard on which all others must be modeled. We rightly find ludicrous the claim of the eighteenth-century French philosopher that French was superior to other languages because in it the words occurred in the same order as the thoughts naturally do.

And yet just because of this, the diversity of languages seems all the more puzzling—perhaps even an obstacle that should be overcome. If every language is adequate to express our human experience of the world, then how would anything be lost if all disappeared into a single world language? Indeed, is this not the inevitable outcome of the speed and global range of modern "communications"? Is not a single language for all humans compelled by the progressive rationalization and efficient functioning of a global economy? The growing dominance of American English is doubtless due in large part to the economic and political power of the United States, but does not what is contemptuously called "Coca-Cola colonialism" conceal a deeper process of syncretism to which even the United States is subject and that will eventually reduce the world to Marshall McLuhan's "global village"? Surely a village only wants and needs one language. That global monolingualism would threaten catastrophe as surely as a species' refusing to diversify under changing environmental conditions may seem an attractive argument, but it is only analogical. In fact, the modern world is characterized by the power of scientific technology and rationality to penetrate social life and reduce it to a uniform pattern against which conscious efforts to preserve the diversity of local cultures have proven futile: local cultures are either obliterated or, perhaps worse, turned into artifacts, nostalgic fantasy enclaves marketed to cosmopolitan consumers. Profound currents in modern life run counter to valuing the diversity of tongues. Insofar as educational theory stresses "relevance" or "preparing students for modern life," it colludes in eroding the traditional humanistic value asserted for studying other languages and cultures.

On the contrary, learning other languages is not simply an interim measure while we wait for a global monolingualism to emerge. The historical contingency and isolation of particular communities which created linguistic diversity are not just negative facts. In the attainment of fluency, the diversity of languages we first experience as an obstacle to communication reverses itself into something positive, namely, that language always fits itself to the contours of our historical experience in a way that preserves and extends them. To Johann Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt especially we owe the insight that the diversity of languages represents a diversity of *Weltanschauungen*. But world-views are not just arbitrarily different ways of looking at identical phenomena. Languages incarnate possibilities for thinking and meaning which can be generated in no other way than by the historical vicissitudes which also generate linguistic diversity. To adopt Edmund Husserl's fruitful metaphor, every language "sediments" the experiences of its speakers with each other and with the natural world toward which they have found their own orientation. Fluency in another language is a specific achievement of our being human: the opening of and to another "world," which yet remains one with the only world we have.

The conditions of modern life have multiplied an experience that has important parallels. Stated negatively, this is the experience of exile or forced emigration: being driven out of one's community and language. In *After Babel*, George Steiner has shown convincingly that exile as an idea and reality has been central in the creation of modern culture. But positively, this is the experience of immigration, of *choosing* a community and settling in it. We assimilate our native language unconsciously; but we deliberately learn another language. The growth we experience in doing so reveals an essential limit of the individual creativity or inventiveness so highly prized by our technological culture. When we learn a language, we enter another way of thinking which is already "there," already home to other human beings. It is not something we individually make up but already possesses an enduring historical reality, a tradition rich and complex beyond any power of deliberate invention. "Living" languages are "worlds" that are still open, like our own, and we can encounter their inhabitants face-to-face. But studying a "dead" language has a special value, for it offers a unique possibility. Anthropologists remind us that most human communities have perished or are now doing so. A few of these communities, however, have not vanished, but rather, withdrawn into a written record. To cross the fragile bridge that links us to these who share the human adventure, to enter a world that lives only if our imagination is nourished on disciplined recollection, is to participate in that solidarity through memory which is a deep and defining human need. This is the very core of the historical consciousness. There is a unique value in becoming aware that there was a time when English did not yet exist and that there may come a time when it will exist no more. The truth is that no language is dead; it is we who are dead to the life it shelters.

The full meaning of fluency cannot be grasped without the experience of translation. The odyssey must include homecoming. Much has been said in recent decades about the limits or even impossibility of "full" translation. The American linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf argued that the influence of one's language on one's way of seeing the world was decisive and inescapable. Such a hypothesis risks isolating cultures into noncommunicating vessels. The same argument would apply to individuals: cultural relativism concludes in solipsism. The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein argued precisely the opposite: language establishes a public realm in which human beings conduct their lives together. There is no "private" language, for even if I used a word to refer to some idiosyncratic particular experience that I could not share, then when even a moment of time passed, I myself would no longer be able to understand my own word. Words exist so that I can participate in ongoing activities which are always turned toward the social world. It follows that I understand meanings not only by sharing certain ideas and values, but by sharing the actuality or at least possibility of social practices, including the practice of talking with one another. Willard Van Orman Quine has put this in more narrowly logical terms. If one does not already share common ground with another speaker, translation would be impossible: there must be something common on the basis of which I can connect his words with mine. Wittgenstein put this aphoristically, "If lions could speak, we could not understand them." Our way of living in the world is so different from that of lions, we would have no common ground to sustain communication. The unstated and improbable premise of most science fiction is that communication would be possible between inhabitants of different planets. In *Solaris* and *Invincible*, Stanislaw Lem is one of the few writers who have grappled with how unimaginably alien other creatures would be.

It seems to me evident that neither extreme is true: translation is not impossible, but neither does translatability have the character of a logical presupposition. The highest value of language learning is not found in leaving one's native language behind, but in discovering—one might even dare to say, creating—through translation the common ground of a meaning which is shared. Translated meanings have a peculiar status. They do not transcend language, but they do not belong strictly to one language or the other. Only the most technically constricted information can be completely translated. Any truly significant work, whether literary, philosophical, or even scientific, however excellent the translation, subtly manifests its alien origin. Precisely for this reason, translations reveal something about an original that is difficult or impossible to see within its own language. And equally, the strain our language undergoes to accommodate this thrust from beyond reveals something about our own spiritual world. In a daringly speculative essay on "The Task of the Translator," Walter Benjamin speaks of this double power of translation. The great Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges learned English from the many books in his father's library. When he was asked whether Shakespeare could be translated into Spanish, he shrewdly replied, first translate him into English. The mastery of another language can generate a playful exuberance with one's native tongue, an exuberance one feels throughout our greatest literature, from Shakespeare to Joyce. English poets from Chaucer to Pound, W.S. Merwin, Robert Bly, and many other contemporaries have steadily engaged in translation. In a work like the black novelist Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, we can see how dialect creates meanings beyond the reach of "standard" speech. In the same way, as English spreads throughout the world, it has begun in the hands of poets and novelists to reflect local experience in a way that enriches the language by diversifying it.

The experience of translating should consequently again become part of language instruction, even at an early stage. Certainly students should learn to speak directly in another language. But they should also experience the fruitful dialectic between languages which translating engages. Translating is not simply a technical process of finding the equivalent word or syntactic structure. The collapse of exuberant claims for automated translation by computers teaches this. It merits study as a distinct activity, especially valuable for the appreciation it teaches of the irreducible ambiguity and many-sidedness of every significant meaning. The understanding of English—both the language and its literature—would be greatly enhanced if there were a body of students prepared to examine the great English translations. In the dedication to his rendering of Vergil's *Aeneid* (1697), John Dryden makes clear that his ideal audience will not substitute his poem for the original, but will already be so familiar with the original as to appreciate the translator's art with an insider's detailed knowledge. Translating should not be seen as a way of eliminating or reducing the "obstacle" of an alien tongue, but as the art of opening an interchange between languages, an interchange whose loss would be a disastrous abridgment of our humanity.

IV

My reflections have reached the point at which they transcend the subjective perspective of the language learner and open into the larger context of the Western cultural tradition. That tradition begins with the Greeks, not because their culture was superior to that of Persia or Sumeria or Egypt, but because during the Hellenistic period, after the collapse of Athens' political autonomy, Greek culture was transformed into a model for education. Precisely because this model fashioned an artificial and eclectic unity abstracted from an actual diversity, anyone could master it through study. Those who did so became "cosmopolitans," citizens of the cosmos or world, rather than of any particular Greek polis. Many of the philosophers of the Hellenistic period were non-Greeks, for whom Greek was a second language. Shared among thinkers, Greek provided access to a philosophical culture distinct from local political, economic, and social life. The cultural prestige Greek thus gained over the various eastern Mediterranean languages had a more enduring and fateful significance than its use as the language of political administration and economic activity. We must keep steadily in view not only this sense of power one language may hold out to those not born into it, but the particular kind of power it offers.

When the Romans conquered Greece and the lands of the eastern Mediterranean, they encountered this presumption that Greek was the model for human culture and for education. Romans like Cato were distinctly suspicious of this alien culture and feared it would soften and corrupt the discipline on which Rome's military triumphs were founded. But poets like Horace and Catullus and practical politicians and philosophers like Cicero translated and adapted Greek culture into Latin, so that the study of Greek became central for well educated Romans, many of whom spent years in one or another of the schools at Athens. There resulted a curious and fascinating doubleness in these men's intellectual lives: they were at once Roman and Greek, speaking and writing Latin against the background of a thoroughly assimilated foreign culture. The economic and military power Latin conferred was counterbalanced by a sense of cultural inferiority.

Under varying circumstances, this linguistic doubleness became a characteristic feature of Western culture well into the nineteenth century. It obviously runs through religious life. Because many of the Jews of Alexandria could read the Hebrew Scriptures only with difficulty or not at all, their religious leaders undertook a Greek translation, called the "Septuagint," after the legend that "seventy" scholars produced it. In the same era and place, the philosopher Philo interpreted the Pentateuch allegorically in order to align it with the precepts of Platonic philosophy. Hebrew had been replaced by Aramaic as the everyday speech of Palestine, so that it held its ground against Greek among the Jews of Alexandria only because it possessed a religious significance to set against the practical usefulness and cultural prestige of Greek. Even more decisive was Paul's "mission to the Gentiles," vividly retold in the *Acts of the Apostles*, which led the earliest Christians to write the Gospels in Greek. Here, Greek's prestige is not cultural, for the Gospel writers used ordinary spoken Greek, not without traces of the languages that were primary to them and to Jesus. Nor was it practical, for the aim was not access to political or economic power, but only to a wider audience of possible converts. Language here separated two religions, the older not abandoned but subordinated as the "preparation" for the newer. Paul's epistles tried to resolve in theological terms the tension still visible in our hyphenated term "Judaeo-Christian," but Christian thought never loses its double focus.

Even more fateful were the travels of Peter and Paul to Rome and the establishment of the new religion in that city of many tongues, with Latin sovereign. The gradual disintegration of the Empire and the separation of the Greek East from the Latin West replaced the languages while preserving the structure of linguistic doubleness. Born in north Africa, St. Augustine spent years in Italy, returning to Africa as Bishop of Hippo. He died as the invading Vandals, a Germanic tribe, closed in on his episcopal city. In many writings, he articulated that uneasy compound, decisive for the next millennium, in which Christianity overlay, bridged, and also preserved both the Jewish and the Greco-Roman pagan backgrounds. The western Church's administrative structure similarly overlay that of the declining Roman Empire, and—perhaps somewhat against his own intention—Augustine's *City of God* helped point toward the emergence of a paradoxically "Holy Roman Empire" under Charlemagne. Though he never learned to write, Charlemagne sponsored a cultural "renaissance," and like most of his contemporaries felt afresh the irreducible tensions among Christian religion, Latin language, and the Germanic strains added to an already bewilderingly diverse cultural compound.

Throughout the Middle Ages, cultural renaissances are marked by the reassertion of linguistic diversity. Within Latin, the tension between a modern administrative and theological language and the traces of antique culture can be felt in calls to marry Mercury and Philology, wisdom and eloquence, sound doctrine and artistic form. Theology itself reached its peak only when Aristotelian philosophy, translated and transformed through Arabic, flowed into the Latin West. But learned Latin was continually in tension with mother tongues. What we call *the* Renaissance renews culture by exposing it to multiple tensions: "barbarous" scholastic vs. "pure" classical Latin; Latin vs. Greek; pagan antique texts vs. Christian scriptures; artificial and learned vs. popular and vernacular culture. By the seventeenth century Latin had been largely driven out of political and economic life, and cultured men and (especially) women could peremptorily demand a vernacular literature that reflected modern life and displaced antique models. Yet vernacular literature remained in fruitful tension with the classics, the continuing storehouse of values and insights secular elites needed even in a new age.

In England, religious dissenters (the descendants of the old Puritans), were excluded from high political office and from Oxford and Cambridge. In response, they set up schools that prepared their young men for the commercial careers open to them. These schools emphasized practical subjects, including the new sciences, and dropped Latin from the curriculum, but included modern foreign languages, particularly French, chiefly for their commercial value. It is in this combined demand for a scientific, commercial, and utilitarian curriculum that language study begins to lose its fundamentally humanistic legitimation. In colonial America, the Puritan insistence on a learned clergy preserved the study of Latin and Greek, while the traditions of civic humanism kept classical studies central to college curricula throughout most of the nineteenth century. But again, the rise of science and technology and the subordination of education to commercial and practical purposes, especially in land-grant universities, steadily eroded educators' commitment to language study. Between the world wars, a "New Humanist" like Norman Foerster railed ceaselessly against the twin destroyers of the humanist tradition: Francis Bacon, the source of modern science and technology; and Andrew Jackson, who incarnated the populist claim that education should serve ordinary people's immediate practical interests.

This brief historical survey reminds us that until very recently, early education focused almost exclusively on what we would call "language arts," and that the language studied was normally chosen because of its religious and cultural significance, that is, because it was felt that in studying it, students gained access to truths that had to be learned from other cultures and from tradition and could not be invented by the individual. As I have tried repeatedly to suggest, recent political and economic arguments for language study seem to me treacherous ground for educators. We owe it to our professional responsibilities to make arguments for language study that do not reduce it merely to an instrument for preserving a global dominance threatened by changing conditions. As educators, our commitment to language study must rest on a humanistic understanding of its value to the student, an understanding that is more lasting than the short-term and short-sighted rhetoric of crisis.

The value of language study is fundamentally ethical because it is an act of self-restraint, an acknowledgement of other people, of the validity of their perspective on and way of talking about our common human experience. In contemporary global terms, the justification of language study must rest on a clear insight into the reality that by opening ourselves to other peoples' perspectives, we are not doing them a favor, still less seeking some ultimate advantage over them. Openness to others is required if we are to realize our own humanity. The specific virtue of language study is that it gives this universal ethical principle a particularized content we might otherwise overlook. Another person's identity is no abstract universal but is rooted in a particular language and the culture it shelters, whose difference must be acknowledged and valued.

My historical sketch aims to show that this insight also lies at the heart of the Western tradition. At that tradition's beginning, in Homer's *Iliad*, the Trojans are already no mere enemies, but fully human, so that Hector is just as heroic as Achilles. The earliest Greek tragedy we have, Aeschylus' *Persian Women*, sees the victory that inaugurated Athens' greatness not from the perspective of the Greeks, but from that of the defeated Persians. Aeschylus chooses this moment not for an ethnocentric celebration, but to remind his fellow Greeks that their victory is due not to them, but to the gods who punish those who arrogantly overstep human limits; and to draw the lesson that our humanity is inseparable from this recognition of personal and cultural limits. Even Vergil's *Aeneid*, which attributes to Rome a civilizing mission that justifies its conquest of other peoples, counts without palliation and mourns without reserve the price those who must vanish—Dido and her Carthaginians, Turnus and his allies—pay for that achievement. I cannot speak for other cultures, but certainly the West is not a unified, exclusive culture confined to a single language but is marked by a linguistic consciousness that is always at least double and by the gathering of a multiplicity of cultures which encounter, clash, blend, and divide again in kaleidoscopic fashion. The good for the student that lies in the study of another language simultaneously roots the student in what is essential to the

Western tradition. For an educated person to know only one language is treason to that tradition.

Two Languages for All Children: Expanding to Low Achievers and the Handicapped

Carolyn Andrade, Richard R. Kretschmer, Jr.,
and Laura W. Kretschmer

From the earliest days of formal education in the United States, learning a foreign language has been considered a painful, albeit necessary, discipline which must be endured if one is to become an "educated" individual. With its rigid emphasis on learning through translation, memorization of grammar rules and endless verb conjugation drills, generations of Americans gave up on other languages and came to believe that foreign language fluency was a realistic goal only for the intellectually gifted elite and the economically advantaged.

A slow but steadily growing awareness in this country of the importance of fluency in two languages, coupled with a greater understanding of both first and second language acquisition and a generation of children who have painlessly and successfully acquired two languages, has led educators and researchers to take a close look at the participants of elementary school foreign language programs.

The general public and foreign language professionals would agree that there is one group of children most likely to be successful language learners. Programs for these children, the academically talented or "gifted," often include a foreign language component. Perhaps since little time and energy has been devoted in the literature to average, below-average and handicapped children, some segments of society believe that foreign language in the elementary school works counter to concept and skill development of below-average and hand-

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icapped children. For that reason, this paper will focus on the role of foreign language in the lives of children in "at risk" and "special" populations.

Part I examines the achievement and attitudes of students in a large, urban, midwestern public school district who participate in a foreign language magnet program. The thrust of Part II is the assessment and educational programming efforts with special-education students from non-English-speaking homes.

Part I. Two Languages for Children in Cincinnati

Multiple advantages of providing young children with experiences in more than one language have often been cited. Landry reports greater divergent thinking skills and figural creativity among students in FLES programs when compared to their monolingual peers. Cultural activities related to language learning in the early elementary grades contribute to making children more tolerant of differences among people (Carpenter and Torney). Two languages enhance the cognitive development of children (Genesee; Rafferty; Hakuta and Diaz; Lambert and Tucker), as well as their listening skills (Ratte) and their self concept (Masciantonio).

Despite these advantages, in this country most foreign language instruction still begins with teenagers. The proficiency movement notwithstanding, in most secondary schools, foreign language classes stress "learning about" language in order to pass computer-graded tests to measure students' ability to apply grammar rules, conjugate verbs, and understand the printed form of the language. Using the language for communication has not been a priority.

In the elementary school, however, communication is of primary concern because through communication children not only get information but make sense of the world around them. Especially in immersion programs, children use language as a tool to access information from "regular" subject areas such as math, music, science, social studies and art. A focus on content within a clearly defined context aids children in acquiring the meaning of language (Cummins, 1984).

In his ten-year study of first-language acquisition, Gordon Wells demonstrates that children are simultaneously involved in learning language and gaining knowledge of the world around them. They are actively involved in both processes. Parents and care-givers are most likely to clarify, extend, and encourage conversation, thus fostering both language and cognitive development. Parents are willing to follow the direction of the child's language to understand the child's needs and wants.

In contrast, traditional foreign language teachers have a predetermined set of objectives which must be transmitted to students according to a schedule. They are less likely to allow the students to establish the direction of language or cognitive development. It is into this scenario that most foreign language education in the United States fits. Moreover, and quite unfortunately, most foreign language classes at the high-school level are filled with only the college-bound students, so teachers have relatively homogeneous groups with which to work. The homogeneity increases in upper-level language classes as it probably does in courses in other academic areas, e.g., organic chemistry or calculus, and results in a narrow range of teaching strategies and techniques.

In the elementary school, however, foreign language experiences can be incorporated into the curriculum before that "selection" process begins. All children can participate, and teachers can be expected to teach all children.

Can you imagine a third grade teacher saying, "Mary Lou just can't seem to learn her multiplication tables. She has had trouble with math ever since first grade. She'll probably never be any good in math, so I'm going to recommend that we pull her out of the math program. She can have an extra art class or maybe go to the gym instead." Of course, this scenario is not likely to be played out in any elementary school—public, private, or parochial. Not only will Mary Lou continue in math class for at least another five to seven years, but that third-grade teacher will use every strategy she knows and perhaps seek the aid of other teachers or paraprofessionals to ensure that Mary Lou proceeds to the next level with the skills she needs. Mathematics is considered an essential component of the elementary school curriculum. Like mathematics, other disciplines have developed strategies, techniques, methods—call them what you will—to ensure that every child learns. Why should foreign languages be any different?

Ever so slowly, professionals in business, government, and education are not only realizing the importance of learning other languages, but stating so publicly. At its annual convention in 1987, the National Association of Elementary School Principals adopted the following platform statement dealing with curriculum and instruction:

> NAESP believes that foreign language proficiency is important for students who will live in the 21st Century. NAESP therefore urges principals to consider the inclusion of instruction in a foreign language as a regular component of the school's instructional program.

The rationale for that platform statement was further explained in terms of the ethnic and linguistic diversity of our nation, the growing economic interdependence of world trading partners, and the contribution foreign language study makes to the understanding of one's own language.

The Task Force on International Education of the National Governors' Association has listed several objectives for action. Among those are "More of our students need to gain proficiency in foreign languages." To achieve that objective, the task force further recommends that individual states "offer opportunities to elementary school students for foreign language instruction beginning as early as first grade. All students should have the opportunity to learn to speak a second language in their early years."

In none of these documents do the authors suggest that foreign language education be limited to the academically talented or the "gifted" students. There is no better time than the present to focus increased attention on elementary school foreign language programs for all children.

The experience of the Cincinnati Public Schools can be very helpful in understanding the effects, on students of varying academic abilities and from diverse socioeconomic groups, of participation in elementary school foreign language programs . From its humble beginnings with a little more than 150 students in 1974, ever growing community support and increased pressure to reduce racial isolation throughout the district have fostered the continued expansion of the Foreign Language Magnet Program. By the 1988–89 school year, over 4,000 students in 12 schools (ten elementary, one middle and one high school) were receiving instruction in seven different languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish).

While the Cincinnati Public Schools provides a wide variety of magnet programs for its students, from Montessori to computers and from Paideia to the arts, nearly one quarter of all magnet school participants are in foreign language magnets.

Regardless of the language of concentration, children are accepted into the Foreign Language Magnet Program only at kindergarten or grade one. Applications are processed by the Central Office on a first-come, first-served basis, with racial balance being the sole factor in placement decisions. No academic screening takes place in any of the elementary school foreign language programs. Students, therefore, come from a broad cross-section of the community.

Because children represent all racial and socioeconomic levels of the community, one would expect the academic achievement of these children to be consistent with national norms. The California Achievement Test is administered annually to all students in grades 1–11. Contrary to expectations, however, achievement among foreign language magnet children continues to be well above the anticipated national norms in both reading and mathematics. Furthermore, foreign language magnet participants score, on the average, higher than the average of all magnet school participants.

Table 1 shows the percentages of students in the Foreign Language Magnet Program scoring at or above the 50th percentile in reading and mathematics during the six-year period 1981–87.

At the same time, the percentage of students in the above average stanine range (7-8-9) also continues to increase, thus remaining well above the 23% norm for the high stanine range, as shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Language Magnet Students Scoring at or above 50th Percentile on CAT

Year	Reading	Mathematics
1981–82	61.2%	59.9%
1982–83	61.3%	62.8%
1983–84	70.1%	76.4%
1984–85	68.4%	74.2%
1985–86	72.3%	77.4%
1986–87	72.0%	77.7%

Table 2. Language Magnet Students Scoring in Stanines 7–9

Year	Reading	Mathematics
1981–82	26.2%	21.3%
1982–83	23.7%	26.9%
1983–84	37.5%	39.7%
1984–85	33.2%	36.8%
1985–86	33.7%	40.8%

During the six-year period noted above, the racial balance of the district has remained relatively stable at 57% black and 43% white. The percentage of children in the low socioeconomic range, as evidenced by the numbers of children receiving free or reduced-cost lunches has been about 52% of the total district population.

Several reasons for the high student achievement have been suggested. It is possible that parents who choose magnet school programs for their children already have high academic expectations which are communicated to the children who then come to school more likely to succeed. Motivation and parent involvement are, of course, two important factors which influence student performance in school.

Even though children come from a broad cross-section of the Cincinnati community, some would suggest that a greater percentage of academically capable children are attracted to the program in the first place. Another possible answer is that foreign language study enhances the academic performance of children of all ability levels. As a corollary which has yet to be explored, it is possible that the longer students participate in the foreign language experience, the greater potential benefit to their academic achievement.

Studying pupils in grades 3–6 in a French immersion program, Fraser Child focused on achievement in language and reading. Among the purposes of the study was a determination of significant differences among low-achieving children who transferred out of the immersion program, low-achieving children who remained in the immersion program, and low-achieving children who never participated in an immersion program. Although the sample was small (57 children), Fraser Child's findings indicated that:

> the French immersion program did not appear to cause or contribute to the reading difficulties these children experience.... The concerns of many teachers and parents that French immersion is too challenging or too confusing for the child who is experiencing reading difficulties appear to lack empirical support.

In response to the question of possible negative consequences of program participation among Cincinnati children of varying achievement levels, the Foreign Language Magnet Office decided to chart academic performance of two groups of children through their elementary school years. The first cohort consisted of first graders in the 1981–82 school year (N=329). The second cohort included first graders in the 1982–83 school year (N=449). As children in each of those two cohorts exited the Foreign Language Magnet Program, they formed two additional groups so that by the end of grade five two groups of participants and two groups of non-participants could be examined.

Historically, the attrition rate of the Foreign Language Magnet Program has ranged from 30% to 40% between grades one and six. Sometimes families who change residence prefer a new school rather than have their children transported to the former school. Some families move out of the district. Others may choose a different magnet program or perhaps a neighborhood program.

One might expect that poor academic performance would be a high indicator of program attrition. It must be noted, however, that classroom performance and achievement on standardized tests are not always parallel. For the two groups studied, the rate at which children were retained in grade (i.e., not promoted) was approximately 8% over the five-year period. And indeed, of the children who were retained at a particular grade level, a high percentage of them (53%) exited the program at the end of the repeated year. There is some evidence (Bruck) that switching from a language program to an all-English program may damage the child's self-esteem and contribute to a sense of failure for the child.

In our experience the greatest percentage of students (approximately 30%) exiting the program came from the average stanine group (4-5-6).

Throughout the elementary school years, students who remained in the program consistently scored better in both reading and mathematics than did students who left the program. Grade 5 scores for each cohort are listed below, in Table 3.

Table 3. Grade 5 CAT Scores

	Participants		Non-Participants	
	Mean	*S.D.*	*Mean*	*S.D.*
		Reading		
1981–82	64.17	17.77	59.30	19.05
1982–83	63.33	16.22	57.19	16.69
		Mathematics		
1981–82	63.40	17.27	59.85	21.42
1982–83	63.93	15.66	57.37	16.70

Interestingly enough, however, no significant upward or downward mobility was found in the low, average, or high stanines in either cohort of children regardless of program participation. In other words, children who tested in the low stanine range (1-2-3) in grade one and who exited the program remained in the low stanine range through grade five. The same was true for the middle (4-5-6) and high range (7-8-9). By the same token, children who scored in the low stanine range in grade one and remained in the program through grade five continued to score in the below average stanines. Of course the latter group of children had the benefit of acquiring communication skills in two languages.

Although the number of children in the low stanine group was too small to make any far-reaching generalizations, it is fair to say that exiting the language magnet program did not increase achievement nor did remaining in the program hinder achievement.

When children from the two cohorts were matched by race and sex, interesting differences appeared. While program participation favorably influenced achievement among both blacks and whites and both males and females, the greatest ranges seem to occur among whites. Socioeconomic differences among children from both racial groups were not considered in Table 4, below, but could have a significant impact.

Table 4. CAT Scores by Race and Sex

	Participants		Non-Participants	
	Mean	*S.D.*	*Mean*	*S.D.*
Reading				
1981–82				
BF	52.56	14.35	53.88	13.77
BM	62.42	14.09	55.54	14.23
WF	75.03	15.23	67.39	24.03
WM	71.31	18.62	59.07	19.97
1982–83				
BF	59.37	14.86	54.16	15.73
BM	58.72	14.53	53.12	13.39
WF	71.26	16.27	67.62	17.45
WM	66.69	16.82	58.64	19.70
Mathematics				
1981-82				
BF	56.07	16.03	55.82	18.31
BM	59.03	15.90	52.96	20.74
WF	72.03	14.85	67.83	22.95
WM	69.31	17.02	63.43	20.42
1982-83				
BF	62.26	17.19	50.06	14.10
BM	58.77	14.45	57.72	17.87
WF	68.47	12.42	63.23	8.56
WM	68.74	16.45	60.71	21.01

While many factors contribute to success in school, the Cincinnati experience points to the following:

- participation in elementary school foreign language programs does not hamper achievement in reading and mathematics, even among low stanine children;
- students who exit foreign language programs do not demonstrate higher achievement in an all English program;
- students who remain in language programs, on the average, achieve at higher levels that children who exit the program.

Further evidence of the appropriateness of foreign language programs for all children comes from a four-year study, "The Effectiveness of a Partial French Immersion Program for Students from Different Ethnic and Social Class Backgrounds" (Holobow et al.), conducted by the Department of Psychology, McGill

University. Two French Partial Immersion elementary schools participated in this study along with two control schools offering a regular English program. With the Partial Immersion model, students spend half their instructional day in French and half in English. They receive instruction in science and social studies exclusively in French. In addition, the French teacher reinforces and enriches math skills and concepts which were introduced by the English teacher. Reading/Language arts is taught in both French and English by the respective teachers.

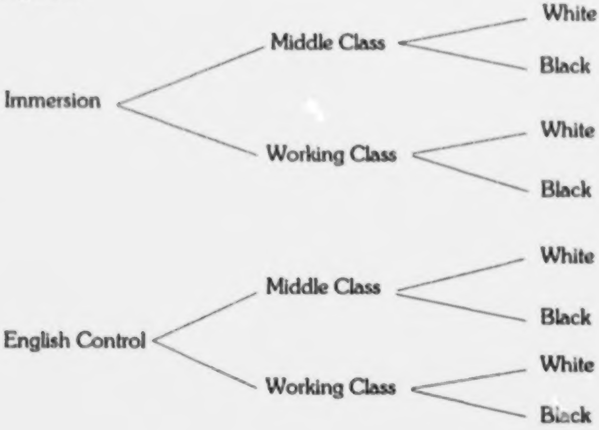
The McGill study adds important information on the suitability of immersion education for children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The following section quotes heavily from the report of year four as prepared by Naomi Holobow of McGill University.

Questions addressed by the McGill Study were:

> Will the positive results that have been obtained in previous evaluations of middle-class children participating in immersion programs generalize to working class children participating in an American setting?
>
> Will such results generalize to a group of children for whom the standard English spoken at school may be a second dialect (the case for both black and white working class children)?

The research design included eight groups of children in both the pilot group (kindergarten, grades 1, 2, and 3) and the follow-up group one year later (kindergarten, grades 1 and 2) as shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1.



Testing materials included the reading, mathematics and science subtests of the California Achievement Test; French Comprehension Test; Test linguistique maternelle; a reading test devised by the Language Research Group of McGill University; and an oral interview. The conclusions of the McGill researchers include:

- The immersion students in both pilot and follow-up groups demonstrated the same levels of achievement in English phonetic analysis, structural analysis, vocabulary and reading comprehension as their peers in the regular English program.
- The immersion students also scored comparably to the control students on standardized tests of mathematical computations, mathematical concepts and applications.
- The immersion students scored comparably to control students on standardized tests of science. This is particularly noteworthy since immersion students received science instruction exclusively in French during their entire school experience.

The researchers found no evidence of detrimental effects in the development of English reading, mathematics, or science skills of the working-class or middle-class children who spent half their school day in a language other than English (the Partial Immersion program).

Furthermore, there was no evidence to suggest that black students in the Partial Immersion Program experienced any setbacks in their English language development, in spite of the fact that many were being schooled in a second dialect (standard English) as well as in a foreign language (French).

Interestingly, working-class immersion students, both black and white, scored as well as their middle-class peers on the French Test linguistique which measured listening comprehension and oral production. This seems reasonable since both middle-class and working-class immersion students have the same role models during the school day and the same access to French.

The McGill University researchers concluded that "children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds as well as those from ethnic minority backgrounds can benefit from second language immersion programs. They were cautious to note, however, that these results should be applied only to minority-group children whose first language is English, albeit a non-standard dialect of English.

While the Cincinnati experience is a significant beginning in opening the doors of foreign language classrooms to children of varying socioeconomic backgrounds and academic abilities, further longitudinal research in this area is essential.

Part II. Second Language Teaching and the Handicapped Child

In this section we explore the issues involved in teaching multiple languages to a unique group of learners, namely, handicapped children. It has been documented that many handicapped children in the United States already have access to at least two languages; these children come from homes where the language spoken in the home is not English (Garrison and Hamill; Mercer, 1971; Grubb; Chan; Omark and Erickson; Ortiz and Yates; Delgado; Dew). The dominant language for them is most commonly Spanish or a Native American language, followed, in recent years, by a wide variety of Asian languages. However, the majority of handicapped children continue to come from homes where some form of English is the dominant language. Because of this diversity in population, the focus of bilingual efforts in special education has tended to be on identification of handicapping conditions in the bilingual population and on appropriate educational placement for these identified children (DeAvila and Havassey; Oakland; Mowder; Samuda and Crawford; Erickson and Omark; Leutke-Stahlman and Weiner; Plata; Damico et al.; Leonard and Weiss; Mercer, 1983; Cummins, 1984; Mattes and Omark; Nuttell et al.; Barona and Barona). Until awareness of home language environments emerged, it was common for many children to be classified as handicapped because they were unable to successfully complete test batteries in English, test batteries that were biased toward standard anglophone cultural and social values and against the cultural and linguistic variations actually occurring in American society (Altus; Johnson and Sikes; Lesser et al.; Christiansen and Livermore; Cole and Bruner; Garrison and Hamill; Killian; Mercer, 1971, 1973; Sabatino et al.; Silverstein; Hallahan and Kauffman; McCreary and Padilla; Coles; Gerkin; Reschly; Gutkin; Tucker; Cole; Olmedo; Teeter et al.; Terrell and Terrell). Fortunately, special education has made substantial strides toward non-biased assessment and toward special education instruction for limited-English-proficient children (Omark and Erickson). This body of literature will not be considered further since the focus of this section is not on assessment or placement issues, but rather on how handicapped children can and/or should be exposed to languages other than English.

Definition of Handicap

Within the area of special education, there are a variety of handicapping conditions that can and do exist, both from an educational and legal point of view. For this discussion handicapped children are considered in three groups with regard to problems of language learning. Although children may have more than one handicap, for our discussion we will assume only one.

The first group of children to be considered generally have normal potential for language learning, but are deprived of normal and/or adequate exposure to language or communication. The second group of children have adequate sensory and cognitive abilities, but lack the motor control to display their knowledge of language through conventional means such as speech. The third group possesses less potential for language learning, not because of a lack of input, but because of cognitive deficits of mild to profound degree that prevent them from mastering the linguistic/communicative regularities of formal symbol systems.

The first group referred to above is composed of hearing-impaired children ranging from mildly hard-of-hearing to profoundly deaf, of visually impaired children ranging from partially sighted to blind, and of children with severe social or emotional disturbance. Most of these handicapped children have normal potential for language acquisition and development, but their sensory and/or psycho-social handicaps prevent them from experiencing the full range of communicative/linguistic interactions needed to develop even a single, mature language.

Since languages are normally conveyed in a spoken mode, it is not surprising that hearing-impaired children have difficulty learning editorially based language. Given the fact that many hearing-impaired persons learn distinct, but visually based language systems (Wilbur), it is clear that deaf children can develop language, but fail to learn spoken language because of a lack of adequate exposure. Indeed, many deaf or severely hearing-impaired children do develop excellent mastery of one or more languages, both in spoken and printed form, attesting to the realization of their normal potential, given adequate samples and appropriate learning opportunities.

Partially sighted and blind children have a sensory handicap as well. As a consequence, they often fail to understand fully how language forms and language functions interact with communicative use (Urwin; Mills; Kekelis and Andersen; Bigelow). In other words, visually impaired children may learn the linguistic system, but they may not learn how or when to use their knowledge. Visually impaired children should be seen as having communication rather than linguistic difficulties. In addition to the communicative aspects of language, some semantic problems may emerge for visually impaired children such as failing to extend lexical items as fully normally sighted children (Andersen et al.) or demonstrating problems with adjective constructions (Dunlea). Since these aspects of language are closely linked with visual experiences, it is not surprising that such difficulties would develop. Finally, visually impaired persons often do not have access to print without modifications such as enlarges print or tactile systems, e.g., braille. Like the hearing impaired, the problems of visually impaired children emerge not because of an inability to learn language, but because of a lack of full access to the communicative act.

By definition, social or emotional disturbance yields behavior patterns that prevent normal social intercourse with others. In other words, socially or behaviorally disturbed children may actively resist meaningful contact with others. As a consequence, such children often have problems with the communicative functions of language, even though they may have acquired normal commands over the form aspects of language (Yudkovitz et al.). It is also common for socially or behaviorally disturbed children to display difficulties with the semantic aspects of language. They formulate associations between language and its referents in a manner that reflects their distancing from other members of their society (Labov and Fanshel). Again, these problems reflect not an inability to acquire language but a lack of normal experiences from which to formulate hypotheses about language functions, functions commensurate with those of their own speech community.

The second group of children to be considered are those with orthopedic handicaps. That is, children who have severe motor involvements, due to conditions such as cerebral palsy, that leave them physically incapacitated. Many of these children lack sufficient motor control to generate intelligent speech, and yet they may understand the language of others. If they have linguistic mastery, all that is often required is the provision of alternative or augmentive systems that can supplement or replace speech as the primary means of expression. Such systems can be sign language, communication boards with pictures, letters, words or phrases to be indicated by the child through some form of pointing, or electronic devices that print or produce artificial speech. There is no reason why these alternative means could not be programmed for languages other than English. For instance, a communication board could be organized using a Spanish or Chinese lexicon. Likewise, micro-computer keyboards can be set easily to produce a wide variety of characters.

In contrast to the first two groups of children, there is also a group that seems to have adequate sensory function, environmental exposure, and speech motor control but who have distinct difficulties learning language. These children range from those described as language or learning disabled to children who display substantial deficits in all areas of development including language learning. This latter sub-group of children may be said to be developmentally disabled, or to have moderate to severe mental retardation. Finally, in this group are children with profound disruptions not only to language or communication development, but to all aspects of self-care; those classified as having severe to profound developmental delays and/or severe autism. All these sub-sets of children share a common problem in language learning although the degree of that problem varies according to the degree of handicap. Children with otherwise normal intelligence and a specific language learning problem display difficulties in may areas of primary language acquisition and development, including the acquisition of the sound system, the linguistic form, the meaning system, and the communicative functions of their primary language (Fey). Although there is some disagreement in the literature, there is sufficient evidence that children with specific language learning problems do have adequate environmental interaction for language learning (Crambitt and Siegel; Lasky and Klopp; Conti-Ramsden and Friel-Patti), and yet these children display difficulties in both interpersonal uses of language and in literacy acquisition. Thus, unlike the two previous groups, this third group's problem is not a lack of language experience or an inability to produce speech, but rather difficulty in understanding how language is formed and how it works in communication exchanges.

In summary, then, when discussing the learning of more than one language by handicapped children, we have to distinguish among those groups of children who have sensory, motor, or social/behavioral barriers to the learning of any language, that is, children who have the ability to acquire or express symbol systems once these barriers are overcome, and those children whose main problem is not a lack of adequate sensory input or motor expression, but rather a mild to moderate specific language learning problem or more pervasive developmental delay. Each of these groups of children have different needs and abilities, and we must consider different solutions for them with regard to the issue of second-language learning.

Bilingualism in the Handicapped Population

A search for recent literature on teaching second languages to handicapped children revealed only one set of reports on the development of more than one language in handicapped children. Bruck studied the effects of a French immersion program on English-speaking children who could be described as having specific language-learning problems with their primary language. Bruck's studies indicate that these children's mastery of French was on par with their acquisition of English. The reports do not provide specific information on the second language acquisition process itself, however. This sparse literature would make it appear that there is little incidence of handicapped persons being exposed to or learning a second language. However, our personal experiences suggest this is not the case. A brief review of these experiences will demonstrate the capacity of a variety of so-called handicapped persons to master more than one language.

In the course of a party in New York City where most of the guests were hearing impaired, the authors met a congenitally, profoundly hearing-impaired woman who introduced us to her new husband (a Bulgarian, his hearing was normal). She spoke to him in French, translating our comments to him and his to us.

While working as part of a school intake team, Laura Kretschmer interviewed a young hearing-impaired man, Dominic, and his mother. Assessment of Dominic's mastery of signed and spoken English indicated relatively standard English acquisition patterns found in many hearing-impaired high-school-aged students. As the interviewer communicated with Dominic, the young man turned to his mother, who spoke only Italian, and interpreted what was said. Because the interviewer did not want to use Dominic as an interpreter, the services of an Italian-speaking team member were obtained. By using this additional team member, it was also possible to obtain an informal assessment of Dominic's use of Italian. Dominic's spoken Italian was described as being as functional as his English.

On a visit to Los Angeles, we visited a mainstreamed program for primary-aged hearing-impaired students; a program that contained many children with Spanish surnames. During lunch break, we noted a conversation among four hearing-impaired boys, ages 6 and 7. It was clear that they were using Spanish in play although we heard them all use English in the classroom. We commented on this, and the teacher walked over to the four boys to ask them a question. Immediately all four changed to English and carried on a conversational exchange that was intelligible and appropriate. Once the teacher departed and the boys began playing among themselves, they reverted to Spanish.

We are acquainted with a profoundly hearing-impaired man, who in order to earn a doctorate from a prestigious Canadian university needed to pass a foreign language examination. Since he had studied French in high school, he pursued and passed the language requirement in French. His mastery of conversational French was demonstrated when he was observed to carry on a conversation with the French-speaking waitress at a Vietnamese restaurant.

Laura Kretschmer worked with a child with a specific language-learning disability whose Chinese-speaking family had moved to the United States from Taiwan. Although the family members did speak English, communication at home was usually in Chinese. At two-and-one-half the child did not speak any language. It was decided that speech/language therapy would center on the acquisition of English, a decision in which the parents concurred. The home language was also to be English, when it was natural for this to occur. Likely, however, many exchanges at home continued to be in Chinese. With therapy this child's English began to develop, as did her comprehension and use of Chinese. Her acquisition of English seems to outdistance her use of Chinese. Unfortunately, her family left the program before she had developed complex language, so it is not clear how acquisition of two languages would have progressed.

We are acquainted with a program for a child with severe physical handicaps that necessitates using an augmentive communication system: a communication board on which pictures and words are displayed, so that the child can point for conversation. This child's parents also wanted their son to be able to communicate with his Greek-speaking grandparents. In cooperation with a teacher of Greek from a nearby Greek Orthodox Church, his teacher introduced the child to Greek, and subsequently, to a second communication board developed for Greek.

A teacher from an Indian reservation reported on moderately to severely mentally retarded children, many with Down Syndrome, who could carry on limited conversation both in English and in their Native American language. Impressively, many of the children recognized without prompting when to shift from English to their Native American language and vice-versa.

Although these examples are isolated, it is clear that there are handicapped persons who can and do learn more than one language, persons with a range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as a variety of handicaps.

Why A Second Language for Handicapped Children?

Why should we provide handicapped children who can learn language with experience in more than one language? As is true with non-handicapped children, there are a variety of positive social and intellectual reasons for learning more than one language. A salient reason for handicapped children is that learning a second language provides an opportunity to think about language itself. This is particularly true, if as Krashen (1981) suggests, the child comes to monitor his use of the second language, that is, the child realizes he is using linguistic principles to generate utterances, principles different from those of his native language. The ability to think about language as language has been referred to as metalinguistic knowledge (McLaughlin; Cummins, 1987). It seems possible that if a handicapped child is having difficulty mastering aspects of his/her primary language that the metalinguistic knowledge gained from learning a second language would be beneficial to the child in enhancing mastery of his native language.

Secondly, exposure to a second language, particularly when presented as part of a program of bicultural exposure, increases the child's awareness of differences among individuals (Lambert, 1987). This should be true for both normally developing and handicapped children. Many handicapped children live restricted lives, often not of their own choosing; exposure to other languages and cultures can only enhance their communicative and intellectual abilities while simultaneously exposing them to the cultural diversity of life in the United States.

Second Language Programming with the Handicapped

Since it is established that handicapped person can learn more than one language and that there are good reasons to consider including them in second language programs, we turn to issues of programming. As is true of so many issues relating to bilingual special education, there has been little research into when and how a second language should be introduced to these children. The literature on bilingualism in special education generally consist of position papers, which favor bilingualism for the handicapped but provide little specific information on how this should be accomplished (Murphy; Juarez; Chan).

From literature on regular bilingual education come the concepts of coordinate and compound bilingualism (Weinreich). Coordinate bilingualism refers to the simultaneous acquisition of two or more languages, while compound bilingualism refers to the acquisition of a mother tongue first and then the acquisition of additional languages. Keeping in mind that many handicapped children have some primary language-learning problems even if limited problems in communication use, the most reasonable recommendation for most handicapped children is compound bilingualism rather than coordinate bilingualism. That is, given the difficulty that many handicapped children have learning any language, it seems reasonable to establish a primary or dominate language first and then begin instruction ion a second language. Which language should be learned first should be dictated by the language used in the child's household or by consensus with the educational facility. Thus, for many handicapped children, the first language developed may not be English. This position has been assumed by a number of special educators working with bilingual populations (Bolen; Luetke-Stahlman and Weiner; Pacheco; McMenamin; Miller and Abudarham; Blackwell and Fischgrund; Christensen). Of course, we still do not know how much mastery of the mother tongue should be achieved before exposure to a second language begins. It seems that mastery of the basic components of the mother tongue is sufficient. For instance, we encouraged introducing a six-year-old hearing-impaired child to French, once she could express the basic word order of transitive sentences in English and had shown both understanding and use of the three basic operations yielding complex English sentences, namely, coordination, complementation, and relativization. Since her mother and grandparents were French speakers, the environment and motivation were supportive of such a move. Rondal points out that for some handicapped children bilingualism may be an unattainable goal. For severely or profoundly developmentally delayed children, the likelihood of learning even one language is so remote and the results so limited that to add a second language would be almost impossible. Additional program considerations are issues such as the potential for interference from one language to then other, which it has been argued may be greater for persons who have difficulty learning one language in the first place (Omark and Erickson; Cheng). Interference is thought to be particularly likely with regard to learning communication strategies, that is, how to conduct conversations. Omark and Erickson argue that for many special children who speak a language other than English, communication behavior appropriate to one language is often imported into their communication efforts in English. Unfortunately, such behavior is often perceived by others as atypical or pathological communication rather than as genuine language interference. It would seem reasonable that a similar effect would appear in the opposite direction, namely, for an English-speaking handicapped child learning another language. As noted previously, in reporting on a French immersion program in Canada for Anglophone, language-delayed children, Bruck noted that the children were able to master both languages slowly, but steadily. The level of attainment in French was significantly below that achieved by children without language-learning difficulties. Unfortunately, her reports do not comment on potential effects of phonological, syntactic, semantic or communicative interference. Research on interference issues awaits completion but should include examination of interference in handicapped children when English-dominant or non-English-dominant conditions are present.

In planning an instructional program, a number of practitioners have suggested that bilingualism should not be taught apart from biculturalism even for handicapped children. Exposure to a particular language should include exposure to the cultures from which that language comes (Pickering; Chinn; Almanza and Mosely; Omark and Erickson; Blackwell and Fischgrund; Lerman and Vila; Wallace and Fischgrund; Fradd and Tikunoff). This cultural exposure should be extended to the home language of limited-English-proficient children as a means of preserving the cultural heritage of the child. For the English-speaking handicapped child, it is a means by which the child can learn about the cultural diversity of American society as well as the larger world.

The degree of bilingualism to be attained is another programming issue. Bilingualism for handicapped learners can be seen as a continuum from mastery of two languages for academic purposes to development of a second language to a functional level. It may be reasonable for some children to be able to read and write on academic matters, or for pleasure and self-fulfillment. For other children, the ability to hold conversations on functional topics pertinent to them and their environment may be a more realistic goal. That is, bilingual programs need not be tied only to academic settings but can include vocational and avocational; settings was well. Plata and Jones reported on a program where vocationally oriented tasks were used to help slow learning children become proficient in two languages.

It has been shown with normally learning children that if certain conditions are met, second language learning is more easily achieved. It is of paramount importance that the target language be presented as naturally as possible, in a communicative context (Krashen; Long, McLaughlin; Hakuta; Terrell; Taylor). Long and Porter emphasized that when students interact with one another in a second language while trying to jointly solve a problem, the likelihood of mastery of the second language is significantly increased.

Certain personal characteristics also need to be considered in program development. Motivation is critical. It has been suggested that motivation for language learning can be of two varieties, namely, instrumental and integrative (Gardner and Lambert; Wong-Filmore; Oller et al.: Hermann; Genesee et al.; Strong). Instrumental motivation refers to the child's desire to master the code itself because it is an intrinsically interesting activity; integrative motivation is thought to be derived from the desire of the child to participate in social activities in his environment where a different language is being used. Integrative motivation can be the result of activities both inside and outside the classroom. If a handicapped child has some primary language learning difficulty, his/her motivation for learning an additional language will be diminished. To help in counteracting this problem, the child might be motivated to learn a second language by exposing him to outside activities where a knowledge of a second language would be useful and/or by creating interesting activities within the classroom where knowledge of a second language allows the child to enter into social interactions. Within the classroom, children might be given exercises that stress whole-sentence (formulaic) productions that allows for interesting and successful mastery of the language (Wong-Fillmore), or problem solving situations requiring the use of a second language (Long and Porter).

It has also been shown that a tolerance for ambiguity and a willingness to take risks are important personal characteristics for successful second language learning (Chapelle and Roberts; Ely). Many handicapped children do not tolerate ambiguity well and are frequently unwilling to take risks. So, it is possible that even though a child may have sufficient exposure to language and sufficient ability to learn a second language, s/he may be deterred from doing so because of these personal characteristics. Westby and Rouse have suggested an approach that might overcome a variety of personal issues and increase handicapped children's willingness to try to learn a second language. They suggested that a second language should be introduced initially in highly meaningful contexts; in contexts that are familiar and comfortable for the child based on his personal experiences. Such activities could be cooking and preparing meals, pretending, board games, TV programs and so on. Children should progress to less familiar contexts such as group discussions, say Westby and Rouse, but the conversational topics should be familiar even though a less familiar context is used. From this, then, teaching can progress to the last stage, namely, using unfamiliar topics in new contexts. In other words, Westby and Rouse advocate teaching a second language by progressing from familiar topics in familiar contexts, to using familiar topics in unfamiliar contexts, leading finally to using unfamiliar topics in unfamiliar contexts, from the known to the unknown. Such a program should aid in developing risk taking behavior while simultaneously controlling ambiguity in second language learning experiences.

Summary Recommendation

In conclusion, we would recommend the introduction of second languages to most handicapped children, once a mother tongue has been developed. We would recommend second language introduction as an active context supported experience rather than a structured passive learning. It is clear that not every handicapped child can master a second language. Some will have difficulty because of sever cognitive deficits, some because of personal; characteristics that reduce their aptitude for learning language. Many can acquire only a basic, functional use of a second language, while others may develop literacy in more than one language. When appropriate, especially for mainstreamed special children, we feel that introduction of a second language should be explored as part of the educational experience. Furthering the handicapped child's understanding of language learning in general, and increasing his/her awareness of cultural/linguistic differences in particular, argues for consideration of this special population when second language instruction is being planned.

Conclusion

The path into the twenty-first century is one filled with unknowns. Yet, as educators, we must prepare young people for the political, economic, and cultural realities they will face. Basic to that preparation is a healthy self-concept, a sensitivity to similarities and differences among peoples, a willingness to adapt to changes, a familiarity with technology and an ability to communicate in more than one language.

In order to realize that preparation for the adults of the next generation, we must draw secondary and post-secondary foreign language colleagues closer to an awareness of the potential of elementary school foreign language programs.

We must explore ways to extend the foreign language experience to more children by working collaboratively with parents, elementary educators and special educators.

We must establish a research agenda which includes examining the techniques used by teachers to make additional languages available to all children as tools for understanding rather than barriers preventing it.

We must prepare teachers to work with children of varying academic abilities and with varying degrees of motivation.

We must develop instructional materials in many different languages and disseminate them so that districts do not have to "reinvent the wheel."

We must encourage student-exchange programs to provide the day-to-day communication opportunities that contribute to language fluency and cultural sensitivity.

We must convince funding agencies to give foreign language programs top priority, stressing both the short-term and the long-term benefits of such programs.

We must collaborate with business and industry to develop career-oriented programs to demonstrate the utility of other languages in a wide variety of employment opportunities.

The list could be much longer. But, although priorities change from year to year and decade to decade in many professions, let us hope that the resolve of parents and foreign language educators strengthens the place of elementary school foreign language programs for all children so that by the year 2000 we do not have to include monolingualism among the list of handicapping conditions.

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Policy and Curricular Implications of Expanding Language Education in Elementary Schools

Kurt E. Müller

Language education in the United States may be seen historically from a number of perspectives, none of which yields an accurate, complete picture by itself. Despite their common denominator of language, foreign language study, bilingual education, and the sequence of courses in English have distinctly different histories. In this essay, I take the epistemological view that language contributes uniquely to the acquisition of knowledge and that only when one has experienced more than one language can one understand human systems of communication. This view contributes to a broad context for language education and an understanding of appropriate goals for various models of language instruction. In exploring the role of elementary-school language education, we need look not only at the broad goal of producing some degree of proficiency in another language—and therefore at subsequent instruction and its likely levels of achievement—but also at the broader K–12 goals for education in language ability.

The Mandate for Language Education

For about a half century the United States has experienced an ever more complex web of interdependent relations with other states that has fueled many calls for schools to offer better and longer sequences of instruction in the languages of our allies, adversaries, and trading partners. For much of this time,

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from the college programs conducted for the military during World War II through the recommendations of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (James Perkins, chairman), national security was the dominant concern among practical arguments for language study. It was clearly in the national interest that our education system should provide opportunities to acquire facility in other languages. As a consequence of this national interest, the federal government was often the focus of needs and the fount of resources to ensure this opportunity.

The 1980s, however, brought a significant shift in advocates and beneficiaries of language instruction. In many instances, economic competitiveness overtook national security as the stimulus for expanding language study. At the same time that American factory workers were losing jobs to foreign competition, jobs were created to sell and distribute these foreign-made goods. As foreign trade began to account for a quarter of the gross national product, this trade became the predominant force in the creation of new jobs. Even as the domestic market became more heavily penetrated by foreign manufacturers, American corporations found their overseas markets more profitable than their home territory. "Coca-Cola colonialism" has emerged as a term signifying both the pervasiveness of the American business presence abroad and the disdain that such success sometimes brings. A good example of ever growing international economic interests, Coca-Cola derives $4.5 billion of its $8.3 billion in revenues from the international market, which is growing at three times the rate of the U.S. market. Moreover, Coca-Cola earns three times as much profit in Europe and 5.5 times as much profit in Japan as in the U.S. (McGough, p. 31). This growing industrial interest in competing abroad is responsible for moving language education back into the mainstream concerns of education. Thus it is no surprise that the National Governors Association should create a set of task forces on international competitiveness, including one specifically oriented toward international education. As Gov. Kean of New Jersey summed up the situation to a task force meeting in New Brunswick, N.J., 11–12 April 1989, international education is indeed a national concern, but it is no longer a primarily federal concern.

State interest is evident in the growing number of mandates to begin language study earlier. In 1988, Nancy Rhodes and Rebecca Oxford of the Center for Applied Linguistics published the results of a national survey of foreign language offerings in elementary and secondary schools. They found that 22% of the nation's elementary schools were offering a language program, but that there was a major differential between public and private schools, with the private schools being twice as likely to offer a language as their public counterparts (34% of private schools and 17% of public schools). Rhodes and Oxford also compared the prevalence of language programs in 1987 with a survey of eight states conducted in 1981. Although the earlier survey was not representative of the nation, the two surveys clearly show the trend toward offering languages in elementary schools (table 1).

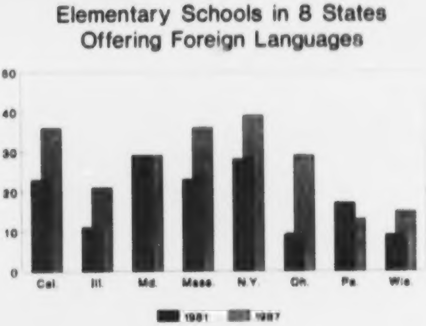

Table 1.

The 1987 findings were based on a random sample of 5% of the school districts in each state. Rhodes and Snow found a range from no elementary schools reporting foreign languages, in Idaho, to 46%, in Washington, D.C., with the median at 20% (CLEAR). The percentage of schools offering languages has undoubtedly continued to climb as one state with a mandate to begin in elementary school (Hawaii) is among those showing low percentages and another (North Carolina) doubled the number of FLES teachers and the number of districts offering a language in elementary school between academic years 1987-'88 and 1988-'89. The survey team found that 23% of the elementary schools in North Carolina offered a foreign language. But when the survey was taken, North Carolina was only in the first year of implementing its Basic Education Program. In 1987 about 46 school systems had FLES programs. By the close of the 1988–'89 school year, 100 school systems of the state's 139 had language programs, with 460 teachers reaching 112,000 students.[1] By 1993, when the program is scheduled to be fully in place, all students will be exposed to a foreign language in grades K–5 and languages will be offered to all students through high school.

Program Goals and Priorities

If we develop an education policy that aims to produce proficient speakers of other languages, we will have to provide opportunity for early and continuous exposure to these languages. In "Foreign Language in the Elementary School: A Comparison of Achievement," Rhodes and Snow have documented the expected differential development of proficiency among immersion, partial immersion, and FLES programs, with a clear policy implication that school systems that want to promote proficiency will favor immersion. If we are to apply language growth to intellectual development, the sequence of study must continue in secondary education. In Cincinnati, for example, students from FLES or immersion programs typically continue on to the Cincinnati Bilingual Academy and then on to an international-studies high school. In addition to continuing intensive use of the language, this feeder pattern offers the potential of a comprehensive language-education program, in which language and English teachers can explore among themselves and with their students the points of confluence in their respective disciplines.

Even with extended sequences of study, however, only a portion of the students develop advanced levels of proficiency although many may develop language skills up to limited working proficiency (ILR 2; ACTFL Advanced), a significant achievement in itself.[2] This likely upper limit for most students becomes more acceptable to language teachers accustomed to advanced courses if we consider the range of ability produced in native-language literacy and oral fluency. Moreover, competing priorities in school systems and limitations of teacher-education programs will likely prevent immersion programs, which produce the most fluent students, from becoming the predominant model for language education. Even with such limitations, as the chapters in this book by Myriam Met and by Sarah Rice and Eileen Lorenz show, immersion programs can teach the language profession specifically and education at large a lot about using the content of other disciplines to expand children's vocabulary and develop their conceptual understanding while contributing to their language growth.

Although it may be the predominant issue raised in national reports calling for longer sequences of instruction, proficiency is only one goal of a language-education program. Other major arguments for foreign language study have emphasized its impact on native language development and its contribution to attitudes toward others. The affective contribution can be met by either FLES programs or the early immersion model, and the improvement of native-language skills has been demonstrated for both FLES and traditional high school language instruction. In his chapter on testing, John Oller devotes considerable attention to the impact of language ability on standardized measures of achievement and intelligence. In this chapter, I should like to supplement his observations and look at policy implications for students who range in abilities. To do so will require consideration of both first- and second-language abilities.

Native-Language Development in the Broader Context of Education

The opportunity for advancement in society at large is restricted for those with limited communicative capacity in English. This limit affects those who use a dialect of English as much as those who use another language at home. It applies as much to those of Anglo-Saxon background as to those from other ethnic groups. Technological development, concern for productivity, and the information revolution have engendered a shift in employment demands from manual dexterity to verbal skills. Despite the lack of a common metric of literacy across cultures and languages, we make multinational comparisons of workers' literacy by asking about limited ability to read the language rather than measuring comprehension, thus testing for "surface forms" rather than understanding of the underlying meaning. For evaluating our own work force and the students in our schools, however, we have come to differentiate types and levels of literacy. We speak of functional literacy, for example, in assessing a person's ability to fill out a job application, and we consider this task a higher skill than reading the comics (and in doing so we do not separate the reading and writing skills as is the practice in assessing foreign language proficiency). This emphasis on verbal ability that has made previous definitions of literacy obsolete leads us to look at a cognitive hierarchy that may more or less parallel linguistic abilities (see Oller's mention of correlations between performance on cloze tests and scores on achievement tests).

With regard to the language alone, instruction in elementary- and secondary-school English classes can range from efforts to attain basic literacy to consideration of literary style. This enormous span of language use can be arranged according to one taxonomy or another. In a concept paper on oral communication, the Oregon Department of Education notes five functions of language: controlling, feeling, informing, ritualizing, and imagining. At the lower levels, where the bulk of enrollments are, traditional secondary and postsecondary foreign language instruction has concentrated on the informing and ritualizing functions, but with the development of functional-notional syllabi, foreign language pedagogy has begun to emphasize controlling and feeling language functions.

As developed in the Oregon concept paper, oral communication includes active listening, with a goal of developing consciousness of listeners and setting. Because decoding an unfamiliar language requires additional attention, active listening is deliberately developed in communicative foreign language programs. In his presentation to the National Association of Elementary School Principals (17 April 1989), Frederick Veidt noted that since 1976, 90%–98% of the children at Fairview Bilingual (German-English) Alternative School have scored in the average or above-average stanines on the reading and math sections of the California Achievement Tests. Subsequent discussion among participating principals elicited a general perception that language students tend to listen more attentively than nonlanguage students. Tegarden and Brown postulate such an effect of listening skills on reading achievement in Eileen Rafferty's report on the impact of the study of French on scores on the Louisiana Basic Skills Test. Such hypotheses are corroborated by experimental studies indicating that students competent in two languages may be more observant or more aware of communicative challenges. Adapting an earlier experiment in which preschoolers gave more explicit descriptions of a display to blindfolded listeners than to those who could see, Genesee, Tucker, and Lambert asked students in an early immersion program and others in an English-language program to describe to one listener who was blindfolded and to another who was not the playing pieces and rules for a game. Although all the children provided more information about materials to the blindfolded listener than to the sighted one, the immersion groups "were differentially more sensitive to the listeners' needs than was the control group" (p. 1012).

In her chapter on language and content, Myriam Met describes the English language arts objectives of teaching elementary-school students to use narrative, expository, persuasive, and procedural language, a classification scheme akin to current developments in reading that differentiate types of literacy (e.g., prose, document, and quantitative) for acquiring and manipulating information. As Met advocates, by ensuring that students understand and produce these varieties of language use, foreign language programs can offer an additional opportunity to develop this facility. When children that have failed to grasp a concept (such as classification sets) presented in English acquire it when the FLES teacher gives these children an additional perspective on the task, elementary-school classroom teachers have enthusiastically interrupted FLES lessons to point out these Eureka experiences.

Bloom's Taxonomy

If we are to foster higher-level skills, hierarchical taxonomies are highly appropriate for adaptation to foreign language acquisition and teaching. In 1953, Benjamin Bloom published the first product of a 4-year consideration of education goals, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*, which has been reprinted at least 20 times. Bloom and his colleagues described a set of six cognitive objectives, by ascending complexity. Although their description is intended to apply across disciplines, the hierarchy of skills is language dependent. For our discussion, I have extracted two levels of detail:

- 1.00 Knowledge
  - 1.10 Knowledge of specifics
  - 1.20 Knowledge of ways & means of dealing with specifics
  - 1.30 Knowledge of the universals & abstractions in a field
- 2.00 Comprehension
  - 2.10 Translation
  - 2.20 Interpretation
  - 2.30 Extrapolation
- 3.00 Application (Bloom does not break this level into subsets)
- 4.00 Analysis
  - 4.10 Analysis of elements
  - 4.20 Analyses of relationships
  - 4.30 Analysis of organizational principles
- 5.00 Synthesis
  - 5.10 Production of a unique communication
  - 5.20 Production of a plan, or proposed set of operations
  - 5.30 Derivation of a set of abstract relations
- 6.00 Evaluation
  - 6.10 Judgments in terms of internal evidence
  - 6.20 Judgments in terms of external criteria

Admitting the potential demonstration of some of these classes of skills through music, visual arts, pictorial representations, and mathematical presentations, it is clear that every stage *can* apply to the use of language and most stages *depend* on one's ability with the language to demonstrate the skill, thus supporting with a conceptual framework Oller's contention of the clear interrelationship between language ability and academic achievement. Among Bloom's many examples of educational objectives, the illustrations he provides for the discipline of English are instructive. Under knowledge, he considers questions of correct usage and acceptable forms of language. The comprehension skills refer to the ability to present an abstract text or to express rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphor, irony) in more concrete form as well as to translate between languages (2.10), the ability to relate surface forms to underlying meaning (2.20), and the ability to draw conclusions (2.30). The divisions into which analysis falls concern recognition of unstated assumptions and distinction between conclusions and supporting statements (4.10), recognition of the indispensability of facts or assumptions essential to a main thesis or argument (4.20), and (for 4.30) the recognition of form in literary works to convey meaning, the ability to infer an author's purpose, and the recognition of techniques used in advertising or propaganda. Bloom's level of synthesis (5.00) concerns the language skills of production: extemporaneous speaking, effective narration, and organization of ideas and statements in writing. Some of these descriptions will be familiar to parents from reading the results of standardized tests of achievement as well as report cards. Thus the hierarchy is related to the national concern we mentioned that has begun to differentiate stages of literacy through various applications.

Recognizing that fluent speech is separate from the application of higher skills to reading or writing and that a considerable number of students poorly master some of these skills in reading and writing English, we acknowledge that only a portion of the students who receive extensive exposure to another language will be able to apply these very skills at higher levels but that many may be able to function in another language if given sufficient exposure to context-embedded language use with multisensory clues. As we shall show, this hypothesis contradicts the prevailing practice of reserving foreign language education for the academically more able. Jim Cummins' distinction between cognitive-academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) (see Oller's chapter) is instructive for language-education policy in this regard. The surprise we have encountered that has major policy implications is that students with low achievement levels on standardized tests may demonstrate impressive performance in elementary-school foreign language classes. Bearing in mind the concrete-language skills typical of younger children (see the chapter by Chapman, Grob, and Haas), communicative capacity developed in elementary-school language programs is available to all children, not just those with more-developed academic skills. Without a long consideration of the general perception that children learn languages more easily, we can remark briefly that children in the programs we have seen have acquired substantial fluency with language limited in cognitive complexity. Even with the meager exposure children receive in FLES programs, they can go beyond rote memorization to use the language they have acquired to express themselves.

A Hierarchy of Foreign Language Proficiency Descriptors

Having introduced a set of hierarchically ordered language skills adapted from a similar set of general educational objectives, let us continue with consideration of a set of descriptors that identify capacity in foreign languages. Although the proficiency descriptors designed by the federal government's Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) were never intended to apply to an assessment of one's native language, they are so applied (e.g., in the evaluation of applicants for positions requiring language skills), and they describe the very capacities we seek in language development whether native or additional.

The ILR proficiency levels run from 0 (no functional ability) to 5 (equivalent to a well educated native speaker), supplemented by a plus (+) to signify that the rated individual comes close to the next level but does not perform consistently at that level. The levels have been described most briefly with a simple notation of language ability:

5 native speaker
4 representation
3 abstract
2 concrete
1 survival (Faculty, p. 16)

The one-word descriptions for levels 1–4 imply a cognitive hierarchy that attends three of the factors used in proficiency ratings: vocabulary, grammar, and sociolinguistic appropriateness (see Higgs, p. 6, for the ILR "hypothesized relative contributions model"). The remaining factors—pronunciation and fluency—are precisely those most easily developed in elementary school programs. The ILR has developed a set of "functional trisections" that describe content or text type, functional ability, and level of accuracy for each proficiency level. Detailed descriptions extracted from the trisections provide a basis for a comparison with the educational goals of Bloom's taxonomy. For our example we shall use two skills, one receptive (reading) and one productive (speaking).

Functional Trisection of Reading Proficiency

Level	*Text Type*	*Reader Function*	*Accuracy*
0+	Numbers, isolated words and phrases, names, street signs, office and shop designations	Recognizes all letters of the alphabet or high-frequency characters	Often interprets even level 0+ material inaccurately
1	Simplest connected prose; e.g., simple narratives	Gets some main ideas	Sometimes misunderstands even simplest text
1+	Simple informative discourse (announcements, biographical information, narration, headlines)	Gets some main ideas and can often guess successfully if context is familiar	Basic morphology and syntax often misinterpreted

2	Simple, factual, authentic, frequently recurring material	Can locate and understand main ideas and details in material written for the general reader; cannot draw inferences	Sometimes misunderstands even level 2 material
2+	Factual, non-technical prose; some concrete discourse in professional field	Can separate main ideas and details from lesser ones; makes sensible guesses	Markedly proficient in reading texts in his/her professional field; unable to discern nuance and/or intentionally disguised meaning
3	Authentic prose on a variety of unfamiliar subjects, e.g., news stories, routine correspondence, material in own professional field	Can almost always interpret ideas, make inferences (read between the lines)	Rarely misunderstands but may miss subtleties and nuances and have trouble with unusually complex structure and low-frequency idioms
3+	Variety of styles and forms pertinent to professional needs	Can relate ideas, infer, comprehend many sociolinguistic and cultural references	Rarely misunderstands but may miss some subtleties and nuances

4	All styles and forms of prose pertinent to professional needs or for the general reader, whether printed or in reasonably legible handwriting	Can read beyond the lines (i.e., situate the text in a wider context), follow unpredictable turns of thought and understand almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references	Often nearly that of a well educated native speaker
4+	Extremely difficult or abstract prose, including a wide variety of vocabulary, idioms, colloquialisms, and slang, even in less than fully legible handwriting	Broad ability to read beyond the lines; strong sensitivity to sociolinguistic and cultural references	Close, but not yet equivalent to a well educated native (Faculty, pp. 19–20)

Functional Trisection of Speaking Proficiency

1	Everyday survival topics and courtesy requirements	Can create with the language; ask and answer questions, participate in short conversations	Intelligible to a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners
2	Concrete topics, e.g., own background, family, and interests, work, travel, and current events	Able to fully participate in casual conversations, can express facts, give instructions, describe, report, and narrate about current, past, and future activities	Understandable to a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners; sometimes miscommunicates
3	Practical, social, professional, and abstract topics, particular interests, and special fields of competence	Can converse in formal and informal situations, resolve problem situations, deal with unfamiliar topics, explain, give opinions, and hypothesize	Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker; only sporadic errors in basic structures
4	All topics normally pertinent to professional needs	Able to tailor language to fit audience, counsel, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, and interpret for dignitaries	Nearly equivalent to an educated native speaker; speech is extensive, precise, appropriate to every occasion with only occasional errors (Faculty, p. 21)

Comparing Bloom's Taxonomy and the ILR Descriptors

If we allow for the major difference that the ILR is orienting its scale to an adult audience using a foreign language, it becomes clear to the general, nonspecialist observer that many of the abilities described by the functional trisections correspond with the development of cognitive skills demonstrated by native-language proficiency. For example, Bloom's division of comprehension goals (2.00) into translation (2.10), interpretation (2.20), and extrapolation (2.30) parallels the trisection's distinction among locating and understanding main ideas and details (ILR reading level 2). The level-2+ skill of separating main ideas from lesser ones relates to Bloom's analyses of elements (4.10) and relationships (4.20). The ILR level-3 reader interprets material and relates ideas, much as Bloom's capacity for analyzing relationships (4.20) requires comprehension of interrelationships. The level-3 and -4 functions of making inferences and reading between the lines approximate Bloom's analyses of relationships (4.20: "facts or assumptions ... essential to a main thesis ... or ... argument," p. 147) and of organizational principles (4.30: "techniques used in persuasive materials," p. 148).

The level-4 speaker's capacity "to tailor language to fit the audience, to counsel, persuade, negotiate, and represent a point of view" are similar to both Bloom's description of synthesis (5.00), aimed at production, and its prerequisite, recognition of persuasive techniques and inference of point of view and feeling (4.30).

Just as the ILR scale is normed to educated adults, Bloom's taxonomy is oriented toward the attainment of the upper-level skills. In the elementary grades, children's language use in both the native and foreign languages progresses only to lower levels of our hierarchy. But even adult language use may be limited to these levels. As federal agencies were introducing the ILR scale to the academic community during the late 1970s and early 1980s, Pardee Lowe, representing the Interagency Roundtable, emphasized the intent of the scale as a measure of ability in foreign rather than native language ability. He would ask his listeners to rate on the ILR scale the use of English by the character Archie Bunker on the television series *All in the Family*. Language teachers found they had to balance the character's fluency in his native idiom with the absence of more sophisticated verbal skills. Despite this difficulty in applying the scale, it is most appropriate to do so. Although trained interviewers may insist that a sample taken from a television script precludes rating the character because the interviewer cannot probe the speaker's control of a range of language structure, the text itself is ratable. The language teacher can (and does) rate a text according to its content and structure to determine its suitability for students at a given level of proficiency. In the television example, the character's productive language was quite concrete, and one could expect him to fail to read between the lines of his son-in-law's remarks.

In an esthetic judgment of a text, the presence of literary allusions indicates language use at the representational level. Comprehending sociolinguistic and cultural references and reading between the lines are level-4 activities. In Bloom's taxonomy, they fit levels 4.00 and 6.00. Thus, such a text is usually inappropriate for language students at lower proficiency levels, unless they have these skills in their native language and the text is included as a motivator, probably for adult or college-age students.[3]

The comparison between educational goals in general and the ILR proficiency scale of ability in a language leads us to consider two ramifications for language education. The first recognizes the reinforcement of native-language ability through the study of another language; the second leads us to consider the skills deliberately developed and tested in sequences of foreign language instruction.

Expectations for Language Development when Children Are Taught Two Languages

In their attempts to promote the study of other languages, a number of language researchers have endeavored to look at the impact of foreign language study on native language development. Various studies have investigated the academic achievement of bilingual populations or of monolingual students in bilingual schools, achievement in standardized verbal test scores by high school foreign language students, and achievement by students exposed to foreign languages in elementary schools. Criticisms have been leveled at most such studies for their failure to control for factors in the sample population that their critics have considered important. These commentaries lead the reader to recognize that research results often reflect the biases of the researchers. Those who sought to eliminate the use of languages other than the dominant one in a given society, for example, have found that bilinguals (usually members of lower socioeconomic groups) perform more poorly than the dominant group while those advocating schooling in additional languages have been criticized for loading their samples with achievers. A brief review of some of these studies will be helpful.

A number of researchers have investigated differences in verbal ability, figural creativity, or general intelligence between monolinguals and bilinguals or between children schooled in one language and those exposed to an additional language, either briefly through FLES or more extensively in bilingual or immersion programs (see Oller's chapter for criticism of intelligence tests). In *Second Language Acquisition in Childhood*, Barry Mc Laughlin reviews a number of the studies of bilinguals, pointing out implicitly or explicitly the hidden agendas of the researchers. One of the early studies of Welsh-English bilinguals, by Saer in 1923, found that rural Welsh-English bilingual children had lower IQs than rural monolingual children (though the same was not said for urban monolinguals compared with urban bilinguals). Reexamination determined that the differences in scores were insignificant and that although rural children continue to score lower than their urban counterparts, when controlled for factors such as parental occupation, the differences disappear (p. 171).

In a 1962 study, Elizabeth Peal and Wallace Lambert found that of 164 ten-year-olds matched for age, sex, and socioeconomic status, the bilinguals scored significantly higher on total intelligence measures and in nonverbal intelligence. McLaughlin raises the criticism that in seeking "balanced bilinguals," Peal and Lambert may have been led to a sample of children more intelligent to begin with (p. 171).

Following up on Peal and Lambert, Richard Landry looked at the influence of exposure to FLES on measures of creativity. Landry compared the Peal and Lambert hypothesis that those who use two languages may have more "symbolic flexibility" and pay more attention to their environment with Henry Harlow's construct of "learning sets," according to which the more variation in reality an individual has had to cope with in the past, the greater the resulting capacity for coping. Examining the impact of language study on flexibility (or creativity) for problem solving, Landry looked at two urban elementary schools that drew from the same population, one with a FLES program, one without. Landry's study of verbal creativity is not conclusive: boys who were not in the FLES program scored better than those who were, girls in the FLES program scored better than those who were not. In his study of figural creativity, he concluded that "children who study a second language at the elementary school level are better divergent thinkers [i.e., they can provide more responses to a stimulus and can take more than one approach to a problem] at the upper grade levels than are children who study only one language" (p. 115).

In a work in progress, Myriam Met reviews additional findings of greater mental flexibility on the part of "bilingual" children and is particularly encouraged by indications that even children "at low levels of proficiency in their second language demonstrated benefits from their incipient bilingualism" ("Critical Issues," p. 5).

Three studies were conducted in 1984 and 1985 in Louisiana of the impact of language study on basic skills' performance. The two 1985 studies examined the achievements of immersion students. Johnell Matthews found that third and fourth grade immersion pupils in East Baton Rouge outperformed their English-only-educated peers across grade levels and in each subject area (cited by Rafferty, p. 2). Similarly, Peggy Pugh looked at two elementary schools in

Calcasieu Parish and found first grade immersion pupils outperformed their monolingually educated peers in both reading and math on the SRA Achievement Tests (Rafferty, p. 2). In 1984, James Barr had found that the rate at which third, fourth, and fifth grade pupils passed the state's Basic Skills Tests in language arts and mathematics was higher for those who had been in 30-minute FLES programs.

To counter the criticism raised by McLaughlin to the Peal and Lambert results (namely, that language students are already achievers, children of parents who have strongly advocated immersion programs), Eileen Rafferty analyzed results on Louisiana's Basic Skills Tests for 13,200 students matched for race, sex, and grade level, comparing third, fourth, and fifth grade results for those who had taken French FLES and those who had not been taught a second language. Eliminating from her sample those pupils who spoke another language at home or who had limited proficiency in English, those for whom there were no 1984 fifth-grade test scores, and those from school systems in which no language study was available, Rafferty wanted to derive a sample in which the language students could be matched within schools with non-language students. With less than one chance in 10,000 that the results would not be duplicated with another sample (p.0001), Rafferty reported consistently higher language-arts scores for the language students across grade levels. Although math scores lagged in the thrid and fourth grade groups, by fifth grade the language students also outperformed nonlanguage pupils in math. The advantage for language students held regardless of sex, race, or grade.

When, in the mid-1970s, the College Entrance Examination Board undertook a review of the decline in SAT scores, its advisory panel, chaired by former Labor Secretary Willard Wirtz, noted

> A clear parallel unquestionably shows up between students' SAT-Verbal scores and the number of foreign language courses they have taken in high school. Those who report having taken four or more such courses (about 10 percent of the test takers) average more than 100 points higher than those (about 8 percent) reporting no work in foreign language; and the averages rise progressively with the number of courses taken (*On Further Examination*, p. 27).

The Wirtz Panel did not wish to identify a causal relationship between language study and verbal ability, however, because it was also clear to them that the more gifted students took more foreign language courses and more demanding courses in general.

As a follow-up to the observations of the Wirtz panel, Peter Eddy, then of the Center for Applied Linguistics, looked at the impact of high school foreign language study on the verbal subtest of the SAT. In his review of the literature exploring the impact of foreign language study on achievement, Eddy summarizes the findings of 12 studies conducted in Australia, Germany, Great

Britain, Sweden, and several locations in the United States with a mildly positive remark that the study of an additional language may enhance performance in different areas of the curriculum, including native language skills (Eddy, p. 8). Among the U.S. studies, Eddy notes Rudolph Masciantonio's report that in the first year of a daily 15–20 minute Latin class offered to 4,000 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in 85 Philadelphia elementary schools, the fifth grade children taking Latin scored a full year higher on the vocabulary subtest of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills than fifth graders in the control group, which did not have the language instruction (p. 8).

Seeking to identify four high schools representative of the population of a local school district, Eddy looked for schools with a minimal ethnic-minority population, a low proportion of students with periods of time spent abroad, high participation rates in the SAT program, and an even distribution across socioeconomic strata. Composed of students primarily from middle to upper-middle class backgrounds (one high school predominantly upper-middle class), "a fair proportion of both blue- and white-collar families," a low proportion of students from non-English backgrounds, small numbers of students who had had experience in a non-English school environment or spent a year or more abroad (which would include residence abroad while attending an English-language school, e.g., an overseas dependents school), and equally distributed by sex, the population he studied did not quite meet these criteria. The sample population was compared with the county-wide averages for scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Test of Academic Progress and found to be more academically gifted than the school population as a whole. For the population studied, Eddy concluded

> 1. When verbal ability (as measured by the various ITBS and CAT scores in grade 7) is controlled, students who study foreign language for longer periods of time will do better on various SAT sub-tests and on the SAT-Verbal as a whole than students who have studied less foreign language.
>
> 2. Having studied two foreign languages has no significant effect on SAT scores or TAP scores.
>
> 3. Language studied has no differential effect on SAT or TAP scores.
>
> 4. There is some evidence that higher grades in foreign language study will increase the effect of this study on SAT scores (particularly the Reading and Vocabulary sub-scores) (p. 89).

Looking at the records of students at Southern Illinois University, Eugene Timpe compared scores on the American College Testing Program with high school achievement records and class standing and the amount of exposure to foreign language instruction. For advocates of expanding language study, Timpe's most significant findings concerned students who were not in the top quarter of their high school graduating class, whose high school averages were 2.9 or below (on a scale of A = 4.0), and "who did not consider themselves to have been in a college preparatory program" (p. 11). For these students scores in all areas rose more substantially for each year of language study than did scores for the academically most able students. Table 2 presents the mean scores Timpe found for the low achievers (left side of the table, 0L–4L) compared by the number of years (0–4) they studied a foreign language and for students who were in college preparatory programs and graduated in the top quarter of their high school class (right side of the table, 0H–4H).

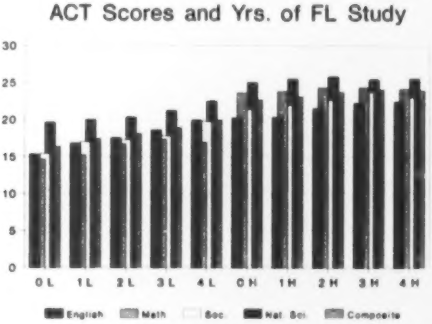

Table 2.

A more recent study, by Thomas Cooper, correlates SAT scores with the number of years' study of various disciplines for a sample of 1,778 students in a large metropolitan area in the Southeast that has 23 high schools, 10 predominantly white, 8 predominantly black. The main criterion for inclusion in the sample was the availability of scores on the California Achievement Test, taken in the 7th grade. As did the Wirtz panel, Cooper found that SAT scores tended to rise with longer sequences of study in any of the subject areas he considered. In Table 3 I have used the data from Cooper's first table to show the trend rather than absolute means, which ranged from a low of 340 to a high of 509.

Cooper concluded that the "variables that were significantly related to SAT performance" were whether the students took a foreign language, how long they studied the language, and which language they studied (pp. 384–85). He notes, as well, the difference with Eddy's study of 440 students in Montgomery County, Maryland, which did not find a differential effect by language. Not surprisingly, the languages that have a reputation for more rigor (German and

Latin) drew students with higher scores on the CAT. Adjusting the mean scores to account for this difference, however, Cooper arrived at adjusted mean SAT scores of 415.8 for Spanish, 426.4 for Latin, 428.2 for French, and 440.4 for German (Table IV, p. 385).

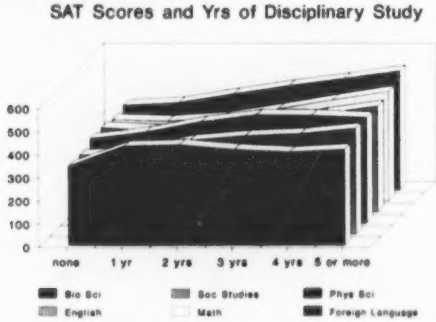

Table 3.

One finding that gets little attention in Cooper's report but which is significant for language-education policy is that economic background, measured by percentage of free school lunches, had no significant effect; economically deprived students who took languages scored about as well as their more fortunate peers. The causal link usually made between socioeconomic stratum and verbal ability (as measured on standardized achievement tests) in English often becomes a screening device for directing only high-ability students into a foreign language. The foreign language achievements of the economically disadvantaged demonstrate the inappropriateness of such screening.

Several researchers have compared the English reading and writing achievement of students in French immersion programs in Canada with the skills of children in regular English programs. The findings consistently indicate that the students in the French immersion programs lag behind their counterparts in all-English programs during those early years in which they are not taught in English, but that they catch up soon after English language-arts instruction is introduced. Thereafter, "immersion pupils often score significantly higher on specific English language skills tested" (Lapkin, p. 24). For a 1982 study, Sharon Lapkin asked a sample of fifth-grade students (immersion and regular English) in the Ottawa area to write a composition on one of two topics, for which they were given 20 minutes. When asked to provide global ratings of the resulting compositions, three teachers from outside the area, experienced in teaching this grade level, found them comparable. A closer analysis of the best and worst papers revealed a set of similar characteristics, with the only differentiating factor a greater variety of subjects by those in immersion.

Seven years earlier, Merrill Swain had compared the English writing skills of third graders from two French immersion programs with those of third graders from two English-language programs used as a control group. The results were more or less comparable, with several advantages accruing to the immersion students: they made fewer lexical and morphological errors, they wrote longer stories (in both languages), and they wrote proportionately fewer simple and compound sentences and more complex and compound-complex sentences.

Language and the Low Achiever

Fred Genesee points out that the majority of Canadian immersion programs are for children from middle and upper-middle class families, whereas lower socioeconomic groups have not demanded such programs for their children (Genesee, *Learning*, p. 94).

To consider the likelihood of success in language learning for less gifted children, we need to look at studies of children of varying native-language ability. In a 1946 study of schools in South Africa, E.G. Malherbe looked at below-average students in monolingual and bilingual (Afrikaans-English) schools and found, contrary to expectations, that the below-average students in bilingual schools showed a gain in achievement over the below-average students in monolingual schools. Unfortunately, as Genesee points out, Malherbe failed to distinguish between dual-medium and parallel-medium bilingual schools; in the former, the schools were smaller and students were mixed and taught in both languages; in the latter, schools were large enough to separate the students so that each group was schooled only in its own language.

Timpe's findings for students at Southern Illinois University are particularly encouraging because of the greater impact of language study on the verbal ability of students who were not high achievers. But the group he studied can still be characterized as a higher-ability subset of the general population. The greater range in ability found in elementary schools gives us the chance to look at the impact of language study on children of lower cognitive ability. Timpe's findings for college students on his campus were paralleled by elementary school pupils in Ludington, Michigan, in a recent study by Alan Garfinkel and Kenneth Tabor (work in progress). In looking at 6th-grade reading scores on the Stanford Achievement Tests for the classes of 1989–92, Garfinkel and Tabor conclude that it is that group of students who can be described as being of average intelligence for whom exposure to FLES had a significant impact on English reading scores. "Two Languages for All Children," by Carolyn Andrade and Richard and Laura Kretschmer, looks at low achievers and thereby debunks the myth that languages are to be studied only by the college-bound. The Cincinnati results are encouraging; they are consistent with other studies of academic low achievers, and they have significant implications for education policy.

Cincinnati's immersion participants have consistently scored higher on the California Achievement Test than non-participants. Moreover, as Andrade points out, students in the language magnets score well above national norms in reading and math and higher than the averages of all magnet programs available in the city. The proportion of those scoring in the top three stanines generally exceeds by a considerable margin the normal distribution of 23%. Cincinnati's program is not aimed toward the gifted and talented. It has no academic admissions criteria. Consequently, some of the students are average, some below average. The experience of the academic low achievers is of particular interest. In Cincinnati as in other immersion programs, the limited progress of the low achievers is cause for concern. Often, the low achiever is removed from the program so as to devote more class time to the development of English skills, in the belief that if the child has limited verbal facility, he needs more time devoted to English. This approach conflates the specific language with verbal development. Though many of our research examples demonstrate similar results in two languages when children are tested for literacy, ability to communicate in another language has been shown to be independent of cognitive achievement. Similarity of skills introduced or tested in two languages leads easily to the matter of transfer of skills from one language to another. If some skills transfer more easily than others or correlate more highly across languages, we can expect reinforcement of language (and cognitive) skills across languages. In a 1983 article on "double-immersion" programs (trilingual education in English, French, and Hebrew), Genesee and Lambert found a higher correlation (.74) between English and French reading scores than between English and Hebrew reading scores (.42). In his 1987 review of this topic, Genesee also cites a finding by Cowan and Sarmed that Persian-speaking children educated in English immersion did not transfer skills to the same extent that English-speaking children schooled in French transfer to English (pp. 38–39).

We could therefore argue that the child who has shown he does not meet expectations of language development does not need more opportunity to show he can fail so much as he needs another perspective on language development. In her Louisiana study, Rafferty converted test scores to z-scores so as to compare pupils across ability levels. She concluded that children "who are performing poorly in reading and language arts should be encouraged, not discouraged, from participating in foreign language study" (p. 11). As Andrade notes, the child counseled out of the program as a result of low achievement continues to be a low achiever in the all-English program, and the low achievers who remain in the language magnet continue to outperform the low achievers who leave the program.

Cincinnati's experience replicates Canadian results. Margaret Bruck studied the achievement of language-impaired anglophone children in French immersion programs. Two earlier studies (Bruck, 1982, and Genesee, 1976) had found that among language-impaired and low-IQ students, cognitive language ability had a greater impact on literacy in the second language than it did on communication skills. Bruck compared four groups of children: language-impaired children in French immersion programs, language-impaired children in English programs, children of normal ability in French immersion, and children of normal ability in English-language programs. Various skills of these four groups were assessed in kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2. Test results for the language-impaired children in immersion show that although these children were having difficulty in reading and spelling English, as anticipated, their performance was better than expected (particularly since they had received no remediation). In their listening comprehension in French, although they still lagged behind the normal-ability immersion group, their gains between first and second grade were greater.

Jim Cummins notes (p. 165) Bruck's finding that children who were removed from an immersion program because of academic difficulties tended to persist in their difficulties after transfer to the monolingual program. In his consideration of the diametrically opposed views of Bruck and Trites, Cummins emphasizes a finding in Trites and Price's work that the authors do not acknowledge. Cummins points out that of the children studied who repeated a grade or dropped back a grade and went to an all-English program, although they progressed "*in relation to the grade level which they repeated*, they fell further behind equivalent children who remained in French immersion" when expected performance levels on the basis of age were considered (Cummins, p. 171, author's emphasis). Bruck concluded that after a K–2 experience in immersion, the linguistic and cognitive skills of those with language impairment were equal to those of the language impaired who were schooled in only one language.

Chapman, Grob, and Haas note the need for teaching children using concrete experiences rather than abstractions. While the difficulties experienced by the low achievers may not be restricted to abstract concepts, the ability to deal with abstractions seems to parallel students' academic skills. In defining successful language learning, we should ask more than simply who the most successful language learners are. Of the lower achievers, we need ask how well they do? This deliberation will both challenge the assumption that languages are for the gifted and reinforce the impression that the gifted learn languages best. But the policy implications of these findings are important.

In comparing below-average, average, and above-average students, Genesee writes of students' French skills that below-average immersion students scored "significantly lower than average and above-average immersion students on tests that assessed literacy-based French language skills, such as reading and grammar" (Genesee, *Learning*, p. 81). In their 1976 study, Tucker, Hamayan, and Genesee found that in the late immersion programs (children who had had French FLES in elementary school and started immersion in 7th grade), the more successful learners of French exhibited distinguishing personality traits of greater willingness to go into the community to use the language, a factor that was not important to success among the early-immersion students. In his 1987 mention of this study, Genesee adds explicitly that performance on an IQ test was more important as a predictor of speaking and listening skills for late immersion students than for early immersion students (p. 81). Genesee also notes a positive correlation between IQ and oral production in French among grade 11 immersion students. Thus, the factors that distinguish the more successful language learners in later grades are minimized or absent at earlier grade levels.

Gary Cziko found that working class immersion students scored as well in French as a control group of middle class immersion students. The Cincinnati scores show that results on the MAT were equivalent for working-class students in immersion compared to working-class students in all-English programs, that results for middle-class students were similarly comparable, and that results by race were also equivalent. A major finding of the Cincinnati program is that on tests of French comprehension, working class students do as well as middle class students and black students do as well as white ones. In a 1976 study of the effect of intelligence on second language learning, Genesee found that below-average immersion students achieved comparable levels in French speaking and listening comprehension skills compared with average and above-average students. On the basis of speech samples elicited in interviews, native French-speaking evaluators could not distinguish between the below-average and above-average students.

Equal Opportunity in North Carolina Schools

Local schools in North Carolina are making a concerted effort to integrate low-achieving students into mainstream classes, and this equilibration effect is notable there. In the three schools I visited, children with learning disabilities were participating at the same rate as the mainstream children in their FLES classes, and they were not distinguishable from their classmates of normal ability. In one instance, I visited a class composed entirely of children with learning disabilities (K–2). Although the children's abilities in this range were differentiable, the participation rate was high, and the children were eager to use the language.

Descriptions of current developments in elementary education demonstrate a pervasive concern for the development of each child's self-image. If success breeds success, elementary teachers want to provide as many opportunities for success as possible. In adopting FLES as part of North Carolina's basic education program, teachers and principals have found that interests in developing a globally literate society and encouraging the growth of self-image converge in the state's new second-language program. The salient feature of these programs may be as much the impact on student attitude and classroom atmosphere as it is ability in the language.

In the Siler City Elementary School, for example, children with learning disabilities and mental handicaps are mainstreamed for lunch, physical education, and Spanish. This K–5 school of 765 serves a community of 5,000. Linda McMasters, the principal, urges the faculty to keep their teaching as concrete as possible, believing that "too much paper loses the children's attention." Virginia Cardenas, one of two FLES teachers, teaches concepts that emerge from the elementary curriculum in concert with the regular classroom teachers. If the topic is science, as it often is, the pupils may get to plant seeds and watch their plants grow or put their hands into the soil to feel the plants' roots. If they are learning about fruits and vegetables, they will sample apples or carrots to identify the words they have learned with the objects they represent.

At Charles H. Scott Elementary School, in Madison, Gail Collins, the principal, is exuberant that some of the introverted children become extroverts in their second-language class. When Alejandra Lamuraglia, the Spanish teacher, takes over Mrs. Burch's fifth-grade class, Mrs. Burch becomes one of the students, and the children find their teacher on the same level as they. Despite the principal's limited ability in the other language taught at this school, she eagerly greeted returning children on their first day of school in fall 1988 in the language and was surprised to find one boy who had distinguished himself for underachievement the first to respond, interpreting her greeting.

In the Garner Elementary School, 11 children with learning disabilities are grouped together in a K–2 class. Ms. Bradley, the "LD" teacher, considers Tuesday and Thursday her easier days because the children look forward to the second-language class at the end of the day. Its late schedule is a positive motivator; they look forward to doing something substantially different, and they enjoy their success. Ms. Bradley also notes that these children have no other opportunities for being "star" performers. One of the students has a brother in first grade who is highly gifted. Only when they speak their second language do they communicate on a level that approximates equality. Joann

O'Connell, the principal, notes that the school draws from the lowest socioeconomic level in the district and that of the 125,000 students in the district, 52% are "at risk" of failure. The self-image theme is an important one in this school, well served by the inclusion of another language in the basic education program.

Summary

Just as there are now communities of anglophones and Hispanics that send their children to "two-way" bilingual programs, in which the children are taught both languages, there were groups in the 19th century that sent their children to German-English bilingual schools. In fact, the view of bilingual programs as language-maintenance opportunities for one major minority led to criticism for excluding the anglophone population. The protests opened eligibility to anglophones in sequences of instruction in German and English that ran as long as 10 years in some metropolitan school systems. Toward the end of the 19th century, however, attempts to school children in two languages were harshly criticized in a number of states and, in a misguided assimilationist atmosphere, led to laws banning the use of any language other than English as the medium of instruction. Accompanying this ban was a prohibition of language education prior to grades 7 or 8, contributing, I would hypothesize, to the adoption of the teaching model used for the classics, with memorization of paradigms and structural study of the language. The other major contributing factor would have been the battle to legitimate the study of modern languages in the curriculum, which had not been accepted as sufficiently rigorous. The morphological approach was suited to those students who had developed the capacity for abstraction, who could memorize tables and rules, and who would be expected to apply these rules to limited use of the written language.

Only those students bound for German universities for graduate study—American graduate education was in its infancy, and the Central European universities attracted significant numbers of Americans—might be expected to develop functional proficiency, and they might well be expected to study the language on their own rather than for academic credit. Even prospective language teachers under such an approach to teaching need not develop significant proficiency.

Meanwhile, the use of languages other than English continued a long slide into disfavor. In the 20th century, public and private use of individual, out-of-favor languages was even made illegal, in the case of German, or grounds for punishment (often without the spurious sanction of law), in the case of Japanese and Spanish.[4]

The prevailing attitude in American society at large may most charitably be described as "English first": recognizing that all who wish to fully participate in

American society need to speak, read, and write English well, education practice tends to reserve instruction in other languages for those who have already demonstrated significant mastery of English. The highly cognitive, abstract approach to foreign languages used in secondary and postsecondary education became mirrored elsewhere. During World War II, for example, the Army Signal Corps' Japanese course at Arlington Hall Station required of its students a college degree with an excellent academic record, preferably Phi Beta Kappa membership, and considerable training in languages, preferably in the classics (Müller, *Language Competence: Implications for National Security*, p. 99).

A language-education policy that encourages only those with developed verbal skills to proceed to another language excludes two groups: (1) those with limited proficiency in English who speak another language at home and (2) those who are low achievers on tests of verbal ability. If, at the end of the 20th century, we accept as a major reason for developing competence in languages the need for communication with societies with which we are inextricably bound, we are compelled to broaden the clientele traditionally served by language study, just as we have broadened to the population in general the minimal expectation of secondary-school graduation. Steps in this direction have already been taken for a specified set of disciplines. In the Education for Economic Security Act, Congress explicitly recognized a need to extend instruction in math, science, computer science, and foreign languages to historically underrepresented and underserved groups. An inclusive view of a future American labor force calls for similar comprehensiveness at school-district level in the formulation of language-education policy.

In this chapter, we have reviewed evidence that ability to communicate in another language can be separated from more academic characteristics of language ability. The approaches typically used in elementary school language instruction do not require a high degree of academic language skill in English, and the restriction of language education to the gifted and talented is detrimental to American society at large, to the projected needs of the American labor force, and to the education of both mainstream and low-achieving students.

In management, it is axiomatic that performance meets expectations. Applying this principle to education, we see the dire consequences of setting low expectations. Educators have responded to low levels of achievement and neighborhood pessimism with efforts to build children's self-esteem, and in many communities the expansion of language study to "at-risk" children offers the opportunity to succeed at something with a reputation for difficulty.

As language programs continue to expand, we should expect that all students will study more than one language. With a two- or three-language norm, we can articulate a language-education policy that removes the we-they opposition of "English = American" versus "other languages = foreign."

"Language arts" will then become a legitimate term as the concept acquires its required comparative dimension.

Notes

[1] Personal communication with L. Gerard Toussaint, second-language consultant, North Carolina Dept. of Public Instruction, 14 July 1989. The resulting 244:1 student:teacher ratio threatens widespread teacher burnout. In Siler City, for example, from the inauguration of the language program until March 1989, the FLES teacher met 89 classes per week. With the hiring of another FLES teacher part time, her load has been reduced to 54 classes, up to 17 per day.

[2] It is an unfortunate fact of life in American education that goals are set more by existing norms than by ideals. The proficiency scale developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages provides a case in point. The ACTFL level called "superior" is equivalent to only "minimal professional proficiency" on the federal government's scale. "Advanced" is equated to "limited working proficiency." Despite these limits, as we explore capacity in one's native language, it will become clear that ACTFL Advanced/ILR 2 is a significant accomplishment.

[3] Consider, however, the range of concrete to allusive language in a language-education series such as *Sesame Street*, in which the concrete language appeals to the child audience while puns and allusions may entice their parents to watch along with their children.

[4] See Heinz Kloss, *The American Bilingual Tradition* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1977), and the set of papers on the teaching of French, German, and Spanish in America, commissioned by the Modern Language Association and published as *Reports of Surveys and Studies in the Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages, 1959–1961*. (New York: MLA, 1961).

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